



ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
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Dr. Shaun Kildare, Director of Research, Testifies Before Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on Driverless Cars and Infrastructure

Tragic Crashes and Autonomous Vehicle (AV) System Failures Underscore Urgent Need for Federal Leadership on Infrastructure Needs and Robust Regulatory Framework

Tomorrow, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety's (Advocates) Director of Research, Dr. Shaun Kildare, will be testifying before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works at 10:00 a.m. EST during the hearing entitled "[Innovation and America's Infrastructure: Examining the Effects of Emerging Autonomous Technologies on America's Roads and Bridges.](#)"

As AVs are developed and deployed on public roads, comprehensive protections are needed to ensure that road users are not placed at undue risk. Unfortunately, [fatal crashes](#) involving this nascent technology have tragically demonstrated the urgent need for safeguards, sufficient government oversight and industry accountability. To that end, Advocates has put forth several [reasonable proposals](#) that would bring about necessary upgrades to our Nation's infrastructure to accommodate AVs as well as commonsense changes to legislation currently pending before the U.S. Senate, the [AV START Act](#) (S. 1885). Dr. Kildare's testimony will focus on these proposals which all address known and foreseeable problems with AV systems and their ability to operate safely on America's roads and bridges. Advocates' President Cathy Chase and Dr. Kildare will be available for interviews before and after the hearing.

Cathy Chase stated, "Advocates has long championed proven and effective vehicle safety technology as a key solution for addressing the unacceptable motor vehicle crash death and injury toll. In the long term, AVs may have the potential to make meaningful and lasting reductions in the number of those killed and injured on our highways. However, recent serious and fatal crashes have revealed significant flaws in this still-developing technology. Moreover, our roads and bridges are in desperate need of repair and maintenance and will no doubt require substantial upgrades and improvements to effectively accommodate AVs. We thank Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper for holding this hearing to explore these incredibly timely and important issues surrounding the development and deployment of driverless cars. Tomorrow's discussion, and the findings of the ongoing National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigations into a number of AV crashes, will have direct bearing on current legislation pending in the Senate, the AV START Act (S. 1885). Advocates urges the Senate to

heed these expert recommendations and make crucial improvements to S. 1885. And, any attempts to attach it to unrelated legislation, such as the FAA reauthorization bill, should be resoundingly rejected. The AV START Act, which will set our Nation's AV policy for decades to come, should not be rammed through without thorough contemplation, conversation and consideration.”

Dr. Shaun Kildare said, “Each year motor vehicle crashes kill tens of thousands of people and injure millions more at a cost to society of over \$800 billion. Moreover, at a time when deaths on our Nation's roads remain unacceptably high, America's infrastructure is in deep disrepair. The American Society of Civil Engineers gives our roads a grade of ‘D’ and reports that one in eleven of our nearly 615,000 bridges are structurally deficient. In addition to committing resources to fix our roads and bridges, substantial investments will be required to ensure that AVs can safely operate. Federal leadership is needed to achieve infrastructure improvements and to create a comprehensive regulatory framework for vehicle design and performance.”

The full written testimony is available [here](#).

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