

**STATEMENT OF JOAN CLAYBROOK,
Former Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
June 23, 2020
Press Teleconference on Motor Vehicle Safety Title of the Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2)**

More than four decades ago, as Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), I developed a multi-pronged strategy to reduce the horrific annual toll of motor vehicle crashes. In addition to issuing lifesaving vehicle safety standards, a new idea was implemented to inform consumers about how cars performed in crash tests. With the belief that “safety sells,” I created the New Car Assessment Program, also known as NCAP or “stars on cars.” By putting the results of the crash test performance on the window stickers of new cars, consumers could make informed decisions in auto show rooms. This important tool has been wildly successful and emulated in Australia, Europe, China, Japan, Korea, Latin America and Southeast Asia as well as well as a new program being initiated in India.

Unfortunately, U.S. NCAP has not kept pace with new technology or vehicle designs. It now seriously lags behind its international counterparts. The popular star ratings, which were first introduced in 2005, now do very little to help consumers distinguish the very safest cars from all the rest. Last October, I co-authored a report with Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety that outlined a blueprint for improving the program and restoring it to its original significance.

Thanks to the leadership of Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee Chair Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), deficiencies identified in that report are being remedied in the Moving Forward Act.

Some of the improvements include:

- Updating crashworthiness tests including for children and older adults;
- Incorporating crash avoidance technologies such as automatic emergency braking, lane departure warning and blind spot warning;
- Addressing vulnerable road user safety to prevent and lessen severity of crashes between cars and bicyclists and pedestrians; and,
- Providing for regular review and updates of NCAP to assure it continues to stay up-to-date.

These changes are necessary to bring this vital program into the 21st Century. Inspiring vehicle safety improvements and ensuring that consumers can make informed car-buying decisions is

essential for public safety. I urge Congress to enact the Motor Vehicle Safety Title, which is included in the Moving Forward Act, with urgency. Thank you.