



**ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY**

**STATEMENT OF
Cathy Chase, President
Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
at Press Conference on Release of Crash Data Involving
Vehicles With Partially or Fully Automated Driving Technology
June 15, 2022**

Good afternoon. I am Cathy Chase, President of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates). Advocates is a coalition of public health, safety, law enforcement and consumer organizations, and insurance companies and agents working to advance safe vehicles, safe drivers, passengers and road users, and safe roads. Thank you for joining us today.

Nearly one year ago, the agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) responsible for regulating cars and making roads in the U.S. safe, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), took the commendable step of issuing a Standing General Order (SGO) which requires auto and equipment manufacturers and operators to report crashes involving vehicles equipped with automated driving features. The order covers vehicles with systems that combine technologies that are able to control certain aspects of steering and speed, like lane centering assistance and adaptive cruise control. These types of vehicles are increasingly being sold in the U.S. The order also covers vehicles which are able to perform the complete driving task in limited circumstances, which are not sold to consumers but are in limited use on public roads around the country for testing, ride sharing, and goods delivery.

Advocates lauded NHTSA for taking this action to improve transparency and public safety. We subsequently have been urging the agency to make this data available and commend them for doing so today.

The public has a right to know how partially automated systems and autonomous vehicles (AVs) are performing on our roadways, especially considering currently there are no federal safety standards for these newer systems. Features which fall under the overarching term of advanced driver assistance systems, or ADAS, like automatic emergency braking (AEB), lane departure warning (LDW) and blind spot detection (BSD) have been [shown to be effective](#) at preventing or mitigating crashes. However, their full potential to save lives will not be realized until the DOT issues minimum performance standards.

Advocates, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and others have repeatedly urged the DOT to require proven collision avoidance technology in all new vehicles. And in

November of last year, Congress and President Biden enacted a new law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, Pub. L. 117-58)) requiring the DOT to issue standards for ADAS and require them in new cars. As the data revealed today shows, DOT must act expeditiously on the directives for vehicle safety improvements and ensure that all road users are protected.

While more time is needed to analyze the data released this morning, it is clear that U.S. road users are unwitting participants in the beta testing of automated driving technology. The data show that of the 108 entities sent the SGO, only 12 reported on ADAS revealing 392 crashes. Six crashes were fatal, five resulted in serious injuries, and another 41 resulted in minor or moderate injuries. Four involved a vulnerable road user (VRU) such as a bicyclist or a pedestrian. Twenty-five entities reported on automated driving systems (ADS) revealing 130 crashes. Sixteen crashes reportedly resulted in injuries. Eleven crashes involved a VRU including seven cyclists.

I want to again commend NHTSA Administrator Dr. Steven Cliff and his team for collecting and releasing this critically important information. In 2021, nearly 43,000 people were killed in crashes, the highest number in 16 years. Making vehicles safer is key to reducing this tragic toll, and there is no time to waste with almost 120 people being killed on our roads every day. I would also like to thank our distinguished panel of speakers for their safety leadership and participation in this event. At the conclusion we will welcome questions from the press. Please use the Q&A button to submit questions at any time during this event.

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