

Remarks of Michael Brooks
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Press Conference July 25, 2023

Here at the Center, we have been very concerned with recent legislative developments, because there are some really big safety protections that are missing from proposed legislation, that would have profoundly negative impacts on consumers, whether or not AVs ever realize their advertised potential.

It is important to emphasize that future benefits of AV's remain speculative and have yet to be proven in any tangible form – but the AV industry continues to promote these aspirational future benefits for people with disabilities, to seniors, for the environment, and for improved safety outcomes for everyone on the roads.

We would absolutely love for all of those things to happen, but right now the Autonomous vehicle that can bring these positives simply doesn't exist, and as you've heard today from Tracy and other panelists, the current negatives of AV's far outweigh any current benefits. We don't have any evidence to suggest that the benefits AV manufacturers are touting will be here in the next few years, the next decade, or much much longer. And guess what – the AV manufacturers don't have any evidence of a benefit either.

If they had that evidence, they'd be showing it, rather than continuing their long-discredited PR campaigns based on a number of fictions. You will hear these fictions repeated in tomorrow's hearing, as the AV misinformation campaign proceeds. Here are a few that you are sure to hear:

1. One is that China poses an overwhelming competitive threat, (Missy) which is actually a security threat that can be addressed by strong vehicle cybersecurity rules that the auto industry has been resisting for years.
2. Another is the constantly repeated, and demonstrably false assertions that AVs are better drivers than humans and will save us from ourselves. No AV manufacturer has produced evidence that they are even remotely close to driving as well as humans. They don't have the data to do so, and they won't until they are safely tested in the same conditions humans drive in every day.
3. Another is that AV's don't drive drunk, stoned, sleepy, or distracted – and while that's correct, it conveniently leaves out the fact that while computers don't make these human errors in judgment, no human driver's judgment has ever been compromised by a cyber breach, software defect, short circuit, data bus timing error, or artificial intelligence training error. Those are serious concerns with AVs, not to mention the vehicles on the road today, and require stronger regulations in place to ensure reliability and security of vehicle electronics.

These and other fictions are continually promoted by the AV industry in order to further legislation that could add millions of unproven AVs to our roads, while preempting the ability of states and local governments to control their own streets, that would continue to subject

consumers to forced arbitration, and legislation that neglects to prohibit the type of behavior we've seen out of manufacturers like Tesla, marketing of vehicles as automated or self-driving when they clearly are not, which has resulted in deaths and injuries to Tesla owners and other vehicle occupants, emergency responders, motorcyclists, pedestrians and who knows who's next as long as the issue remains unaddressed by NHTSA.

In a nutshell, we don't believe that current legislative proposals, and particularly the subcommittee's majority proposal, are strong enough to ensure that AV's are safely deployed in a manner that brings true benefits to communities across the country. There is no China competitive threat, there is no AV that can currently save us from ourselves, and there is no rationale that supports removing consumer safety protections to benefit a highly speculative and overhyped industry.