

Remarks of Mike Doyle  
Struck by a SUV Driver and Seriously Injured as a Pedestrian  
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Arlington Families for Safe Streets (Arl FSS)  
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In December 2016, I was walking home from work in Alexandria, VA. I was halfway through a crosswalk when a driver of an SUV turning left crashed into me. He hit me with such force that my head put a dent in the SUV's hood, and I was carried for several yards before I hit the ground.

By the time EMTs got to me, I knew I was badly injured, but I wasn't sure how bad or whether I was going to live. Blood covered my eyes. Suddenly I heard my wife's voice and felt the touch of her hand. I was never so glad to know of her presence.

I was taken to George Washington Emergency Trauma Center. I had a fractured forehead causing significant subdermal hematomas. I had a broken nose, broken bones in my hand, plus nerve damage to my leg, which would eventually heal. But it took time to regain my vision, and I required three years of neurological rehab.

Not only did the crash do serious damage to me but my wife was traumatized as well. The nightmare of what happened never really leaves us.

Once I got over the emotions of self-pity and anger, I knew I wanted to make the streets safer for all vulnerable road users. I started a pedestrian street safety advocacy organization called Alexandria Families for Safe Streets. AFSS has grown from a small group of five people in the summer of 2017 to over 900 people on our AFSS mailing list. I also founded two other FSS chapters in Fairfax and Arlington Counties respectively, so our total Northern Virginia (NoVA FSS) chapters of Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax now exceed 1,400 members.

We advocate for improvements we know will save lives including collecting data about near misses and dangerous locations, implementing road safety designs, and changing traffic regulations to improve safety on our streets.

In this new era of oversized vehicles, electric vehicles which are becoming bigger and faster, and driverless vehicles, it is more important than ever to require research-proven pedestrian safety technology. These include Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), collision avoidance technology, speed reduction technology and Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) systems with pedestrian detection. We need federal safety standards to make sure these systems perform optimally, and we need them to be required in all new vehicles. These systems will save thousands of lives over time.

Conversely, autonomous vehicles are not ready for prime time. I urge our Nation's leaders to be thoughtful and thorough as they consider AV legislation because lives are in their hands. We need them to prioritize people. The safety of the public must not be sacrificed for AV industry profit.