



ADVOCATES  
FOR HIGHWAY  
& AUTO SAFETY

December 22, 2023

The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Leader  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Republican  
Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair  
The Honorable Susan Collins, Vice Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Brian Schatz, Chair  
The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith, Ranking  
Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and  
Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker  
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Democratic Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Chair  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair  
The Honorable Mike Quigley, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and  
Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Republican Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson, Democratic Leader Jeffries,  
Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Schatz, Ranking Member Hyde-Smith, Chair Granger,  
Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Cole and Ranking Member Quigley:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) is committed to eliminating the preventable physical, emotional, and economic toll of motor vehicle crashes. As deliberations on compromise language for the FY 2024 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) funding legislation proceed, we urge you to reject anti-safety provisions and riders.

The status of our nation's roadways is dangerous, deadly and dire. On average, 118 people were killed every day on roads in the U.S. in 2021,<sup>i</sup> totaling nearly 43,000 fatalities for the year. An additional 2.5 million people were injured.<sup>ii</sup> This represents a 27 percent increase in deaths in just a decade.<sup>iii</sup> Early projections for 2022 traffic fatalities remain high,<sup>iv</sup> as do estimates for the first six months of 2023.<sup>v</sup>

These crashes are not only devastating to families and communities, but they also impose a tremendous cost burden on society. In 2019, crashes, injuries, and fatalities imposed a financial burden of nearly \$1.4 trillion in total costs to society -- \$340 billion of which are direct economic costs. This amount is equivalent to a "crash tax" of \$1,035 levied on every person living in the U.S.<sup>vi</sup> In 2018, crashes alone cost employers \$72.2 billion.<sup>vii</sup> When adjusted solely for inflation, the amount is more than \$87 billion in 2023.

Despite the clear and compelling urgency to address the calamity on our roadways, provisions have been included in the Senate and House THUD bills, S. Amdt. 1092 to H.R. 4366 and H.R. 4820, that would further

imperil the traveling public. We urge you to ensure that the following provisions are not perpetuated in the compromise language including to: prohibit the use of funds to finalize, implement, or enforce the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking related to automatic emergency braking (AEB) for heavy vehicles; prohibit the use of funds to promulgate or enforce certain new safety rules; prohibit use of funds to advance rules for speed limiting devices in commercial motor vehicles (CMVs); reduce U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) leadership salary; permit truck weight increases or increases in axle weight for certain trucks in Mississippi, West Virginia or any other state; prohibit funding to enforce requirements related to electronic logging devices (ELD) for carriers transporting livestock and insects; and, prohibit use of funds to require inward-facing cameras for the Safe Driver Apprenticeship Pilot Program (SDAP) and to require that the SDAP is registered with the Department of Labor's "industry-driven, high-quality career" Registered Apprenticeship Program to ensure the integrity of the SDAP. These measures as well as language to defund or repeal rulemaking for advanced impaired driving prevention technology and any new anti-safety riders must not be included in the annual funding legislation.

Additionally, sufficient funding and resources for the U.S. DOT and its safety agencies must be ensured to enable them to achieve their safety missions. Proven solutions that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs must be advanced and retained during this time of historically high crash deaths and injuries.

Sincerely,



Catherine Chase  
President

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<sup>i</sup> Overview of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes in 2021, NHTSA, Apr. 2023, DOT HS 813 435. (Overview 2021).

<sup>ii</sup> Overview 2021.

<sup>iii</sup> Traffic Safety Facts 2020: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data, NHTSA, Oct. 2022, DOT HS 813 375, (Annual Report 2020); and Overview 2021; [comparing 2012 to 2021].

<sup>iv</sup> Traffic Safety Facts: Crash Stats, Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities in 2022, NHTSA, Apr. 2023, DOT HS 813 428. (Early Estimates 2022).

<sup>v</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2023, September). Early estimate of motor vehicle traffic fatalities for the first half of 2023 (Crash•Stats Brief Statistical Summary. Report No. DOT HS 813 514). NHTSA.

<sup>vi</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Dec. 2022, DOT HS 813 403.

<sup>vii</sup> Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes to Employers 2019, Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, March 2021.