

May 13, 2025

Dr. Juan Carlos Muñoz
Transport and Telecommunications Minister of Chile
Chair, International Transport Forum
Amunategui 139
Santiago, Chile

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U. S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, District of Columbia 20590

Dear Dr. Muñoz and Secretary Duffy:

As leading public health, consumer and safety organizations in the U.S., we are writing to you as the International Transport Forum 2025 Summit commences to convey our concern that international trade negotiations not result in a weakening of motor vehicle safety standards.

On average, 112 people were killed every day on roads in the U.S., totaling nearly 41,000 fatalities in 2023. This is a 24 percent increase in deaths in just a decade. An additional 2.44 million people were injured. Early projections for 2024 traffic fatalities remain at a similar historic high level; over 39,000 people are estimated to have died that year.

In addition to the physical and emotional repercussions of motor vehicle crashes, the annual economic cost is approximately \$340 billion (2019 dollars). This figure equates to every person living in the U.S. essentially paying an annual “crash tax” of over \$1,000. Moreover, the total value of societal harm from motor vehicle crashes in 2019, which includes loss of life, pain and decreased quality of life, was nearly \$1.4 trillion. When adjusted solely for inflation, this figure amounts to over \$1.72 trillion.

According to research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which compared traffic fatality rates over the period 2015 – 2019 with 28 other high income countries, “the population-based death rate in the United States (11.1 per 100,000 population; 36,355 deaths) was the highest among the 29 high-income countries and was 2.3 times the average rate of the 28 other high-income countries (4.8).” Yet, this serious public health problem is worldwide, and proven solutions, including improving current vehicle safety standards, must be advanced. Any steps in the opposition direction to weaken standards will result in more preventable crashes, fatalities and injuries.

Standards which will continue to improve global road safety mustn't be impacted by international economic negotiations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
America Walks
BioInjury
Center for Auto Safety
Consumer Federation of America
Consumer Reports
Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety
Families for Safe Streets

Kids and Car Safety
National Coalition for Safer Roads
National Consumers League
National Safety Council
Safety Research & Strategies
StopDistractions.org
The League of American Bicyclists
Truck Safety Coalition