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**ORAL TESTIMONY OF CHRIS SPEAR, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE AMERICAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

*SEPTEMBER 13, 2017*

CHAIRMAN THUNE, SENATOR PETERS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY ON THE POTENTIAL OF SELF-DRIVING TRUCKS. I HOPE MY TESTIMONY WILL HELP UNWIND SOME MYTHS ABOUT AUTOMATION AND OUR INDUSTRY, AND WILL DEMONSTRATE WHY TRUCKING NEEDS TO BE AT THE TABLE AS THE ROADMAP FOR AUTOMATED VEHICLES IS BEING WRITTEN.

I HAVE THE HONOR OF SERVING AS THE PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE AMERICAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATIONS – THE COUNTRY’S LEADING ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING OUR NATION’S TRUCKING INDUSTRY. THE ATA FEDERATION HAS MORE THAN 30,000 MEMBER COMPANIES, SPANNING ALL PARTS OF THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY FROM EVERY SIZE, TYPE, AND CLASS OF MOTOR CARRIER OPERATION TO TRUCK MAKERS, TECH COMPANIES AND INSURERS.

THAT DIVERSE MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT FOR DISCUSSIONS LIKE THIS ONE – WHERE THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY’S KEY ROLE IN OUR ECONOMY MEETS RAPIDLY DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY. THERE ARE MORE THAN 7 MILLION PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN TRUCKING-RELATED JOBS IN THE U.S., INCLUDING 3.5 MILLION TRUCK DRIVERS. 1 IN 16 JOBS IN THE U.S. IS TRUCKING-RELATED, WHERE TRUCKING IS THE TOP JOB IN 29 STATES. TRUCK DRIVERS, WHO ATA IS CELEBRATING THIS WEEK AS PART OF NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVER APPRECIATION WEEK, MOVE MORE THAN 70% OF OUR NATION’S FREIGHT TONNAGE. THEY HELP DELIVER PRODUCTS TO COMMUNITIES IN EVERY CORNER OF THE COUNTRY EVERY DAY – STORES, FACTORIES, SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS... AND AS



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WE'RE SEEING TODAY, THEY'RE ON THE FRONT LINES OF DISASTER RESPONSE, DELIVERING SUPPLIES TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS AND FLORIDA LIVE AND REBUILD AFTER TWO HISTORIC STORMS.

THOSE SAME DRIVERS, WE BELIEVE, WILL BE A PART OF OUR INDUSTRY FOR THE LONG HAUL. WHILE SOME PEOPLE USE THE TERMS "AUTONOMOUS" AND "DRIVERLESS" INTERCHANGEABLY, ATA BELIEVES THE WORLD OF AUTOMATED VEHICLES WILL STILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR DRIVERS. JUST AS PILOTS PLAY A KEY ROLE IN OUR AIRLINE INDUSTRY, TRUCK DRIVERS WILL DO THE SAME ON THE GROUND BY LEVERAGING THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATED TECHNOLOGY WHILE NAVIGATING THE CITY-SCAPES AND HANDLING THE CUSTOMER PICK-UPS AND DELIVERIES.

THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY SPENDS OVER \$9 BILLION ANNUALLY ON SAFETY, INCLUDING TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS, TO HELP ENSURE THAT DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS OF ALL VEHICLES MAKE IT SAFELY TO THEIR DESTINATION. THE TECHNOLOGY WE'RE DISCUSSING TODAY IS THE NEXT STEP IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE TYPES OF SAFETY TECHNOLOGY THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY IS ALREADY INVESTING IN.

THIS TECHNOLOGY IS BECOMING MORE ROBUST IN BOTH COMMERCIAL AND PASSENGER VEHICLES. TO FULLY MAXIMIZE THE SAFETY AND OTHER BENEFITS OF AUTOMATED DRIVING TECHNOLOGY, IT MAKES SENSE TO PROVIDE PROTECTIONS AND INCENTIVES FOR INNOVATION IN COMMERCIAL VEHICLES, NOT JUST PASSENGER VEHICLES. THIS INCLUDES FEDERAL PREEMPTION TO ENSURE THAT STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS DO NOT IMPEDE INTERSTATE COMMERCE. IT ALSO INCLUDES THE ABILITY TO RECEIVE EXEMPTIONS FROM EXISTING FEDERAL REGULATIONS SO THAT NEW TECHNOLOGY CAN BE DEVELOPED AND TESTED, BOTH IN COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL VEHICLES.



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WE ARE AT A CRITICAL MOMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUTONOMOUS TECHNOLOGY. THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED – INCLUDING THOSE ABOUT CYBERSECURITY, ABOUT THE IMPACT ON TRUCKING OPERATIONS AND HOW VEHICLES WILL INTERACT WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THOSE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED FOR COMMERCIAL AND PASSENGER VEHICLES AT THE SAME TIME.

AS YOU DRAFT LEGISLATION INTENDED TO ADDRESS MANY OF THESE QUESTIONS, I WOULD RESPECTFULLY ASK THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING POINTS.

FIRST, ENSURE THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS THE SOLE AUTHORITY TO REGULATE AUTOMATED VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY. AS AN INDUSTRY THAT ROUTINELY CROSSES STATE LINES, THE RULES OF THE ROAD MUST BE THE SAME ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A FREE FLOW OF GOODS. OUR INDUSTRY CANNOT BE SUBJECT TO A PATCHWORK OF CONFLICTING STATE RULES. WE SERVICE THE ENTIRE COUNTRY, AND THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY NEEDS UNIFORM RULES TO EFFECTIVELY DO THAT.

SECOND, WE BELIEVE FEDERAL AGENCIES AND STATE GOVERNMENTS MUST COMMIT TO SUPPORTING INNOVATION FOR BOTH COMMERCIAL AND PASSENGER VEHICLES, USING EXISTING REGULATORY EXEMPTIONS TO ALLOW MANUFACTURERS AND TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES TO TEST AND DEVELOP NEW SYSTEMS.

THIRD, FEDERAL AGENCIES MUST COORDINATE THEIR MISSIONS WITH RESPECT TO AUTOMATED VEHICLES. WE BELIEVE THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATED VEHICLES WOULD BE GREATLY ENHANCED BY VEHICLE CONNECTIVITY USING THE 5.9 GHZ SAFETY SPECTRUM. THE USE OF THIS COMMUNICATIONS CHANNEL FOR VEHICLE-TO-VEHICLE AND VEHICLE-TO-INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS WILL FULLY UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF AUTOMATED VEHICLES TO IMPROVE SAFETY, REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION, AND



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DECREASE EMISSIONS. WE ENCOURAGE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION TO PRESERVE ALL 7 CHANNELS OF THE 5.9 GHZ SPECTRUM FOR SAFETY AND TO TAKE NO ACTION THAT COULD HARM THE INITIATIVES THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS PURSUING WITH THIS SPECTRUM.

FINALLY, WE URGE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE EXISTING SLATE OF FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY REGULATIONS AND HOW THEY MIGHT BE IMPACTED BY INCREASED AUTOMATION, AS WELL AS HOW REGULATIONS CAN ACCOMMODATE THIS NEW TECHNOLOGY AND IMPROVE SAFETY, PRODUCTIVITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE THE IMPACT OF AUTOMATED VEHICLE USE ON CSA SCORES, LIABILITY AND INSURANCE REGULATIONS, SPEED LIMITERS AND HOURS-OF-SERVICE RULES. THIS ISN'T TO SAY THESE REGULATIONS SHOULD BE CHANGED, BUT DOT SHOULD FIRST DETERMINE HOW A MORE AUTOMATED ENVIRONMENT WILL IMPACT THE INDUSTRY IT REGULATES IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE DISRUPTION AND CONFUSION AS THIS TECHNOLOGY BECOMES MORE ROBUST AND WIDELY AVAILABLE.

THIS CONCLUDES MY TESTIMONY. CHAIRMAN THUNE, SENATOR PETERS AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, I THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY ON THIS IMPORTANT TOPIC, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR QUESTIONS.