COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & COMMERCE
DEMOCRATS
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

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Statement by Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr., as prepared for delivery
House Energy and Commerce Committee
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade
Hearing on "Vehicle to Vehicle Communications and Connected Roadways of the Future"

Today's hearing is a welcome opportunity to learn more about vehicle-to-vehicle, or V2V, communications – a technology with great potential to improve safety on our highways and roads.

Despite the enormous progress we've made over the past several decades in installing air bags, seat belts, and other crash-resilient measures in our vehicles, fatalities from car crashes still number in the tens of thousands each year, and preventable injuries number in the millions. We can, and must, do more to ensure the safety of our driving population. One way to do this is through crash avoidance technologies such as V2V communications.

Over the past decade and a half, government, industry, and the research community have worked together to help make so-called "connected cars" a reality. This cooperative effort has produced a system that allows cars to communicate with each other over a wireless network and a host of on-board features designed to provide warnings to drivers about potentially dangerous situations detected through those vehicle-to-vehicle communications.

For example, a V2V system can warn a driver approaching an intersection if another vehicle is about to run through a stop sign, thereby avoiding a potential collision. V2V systems have also been tested to help drivers brake suddenly, avoid blind spot collisions, and safely change lanes. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that this technology has the potential to reduce unimpaired vehicle crashes by 80 percent.

While the progress and potential of this technology are clear, we in Congress must continue to ensure proper oversight as NHTSA moves aggressively toward its goal of finalizing its V2V rulemaking by the end of this year. While pushing for V2V-enabled cars, NHTSA must also ensure drivers have the most beneficial crash avoidance and crashworthiness technologies in

all cars, not just those supported by V2V communications. Vehicle-to-vehicle communications is just one component of an overall strategy to make our highways and roads a safe place to drive.

Ensuring privacy and security should also a top priority for Congress. Safe vehicles must be resilient against hacking attempts and must ensure the anonymity of drivers' data. Consumer groups and the Federal Trade Commission provided NHTSA with comments on how to ensure consumer privacy and security in its rulemaking proceeding, and my hope is that the agency addresses these concerns moving forward.

The availability of spectrum is another important component of our discussion of V2V implementation. Congress has heard repeatedly from stakeholders in the intelligent transportation community as well as the unlicensed community about their legitimate concerns regarding sharing spectrum in the upper 5 GHz band. I am confident both sides can work together to resolve their difference so consumers see a two-fold benefit – V2V communications that improve vehicle safety, and an expansion of Wi-Fi networks that broaden access to the Internet. This Committee recently initiated a series of bipartisan meetings to facilitate a sharing solution among all stakeholders in this area, and I look forward to continuing this worthwhile effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for convening this hearing, and thank you to the witnesses for your testimony. As Transportation Secretary Foxx stated last month, our goal should be moving toward an era when vehicle safety isn't just about surviving crashes; it's about avoiding them.

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