

Statement of Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade Member Kevin Mullin
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade

Hearing on “Looking Under the Hood: The State of NHTSA and Motor Vehicle Safety”

June 26, 2025

Thank you, Ranking Member Schakowsky. And thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

Recent transformative developments in vehicle technology have been exciting to see – and they speak to the need for congressional action.

One topic of our hearing today will be autonomous vehicles: As someone who represents most of the San Francisco peninsula – which has been the epicenter of autonomous vehicle development – I’ve seen firsthand how rapidly this technology is advancing.

While other areas of the country are beginning to take note, Waymos have been cruising through my district for years now. It has truly been remarkable to see and experience this technology first hand. I see its potential for transforming traffic safety and eventually leading to a rapid decline in injuries and fatalities.

And I believe as it develops, we have a responsibility to make sure it’s safe and not causing unintended consequences.

This is why my colleagues and I have been asking NHTSA to collect more information about AVs for years. But the agency has declined to do so, despite the fact that more and more AVs are driving on our roads.

This isn’t a partisan issue. NHTSA could have done more under the previous administration. Now, under President Trump, I am even more concerned about the agency’s recent steps to reduce reporting requirements and cut staffing.

I look forward to speaking with our witnesses later today about why we need to be doing more, not less.

Another issue of safety that this Committee has looked at for years is distracted driving, which, in 2023, was responsible for more than 3,000 traffic deaths in the US.

One technology that may pose new risks is the replacement of traditional tactile controls with dashboard touchscreens, among other developments. Other countries are already exploring whether these new technologies contribute to distracted driving, and I believe we should be too.

That’s why I recently reintroduced the Driver Technology & Pedestrian Safety Act, to study how the driver experience, including the use of touch screens, affect driver attention and

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therefore pedestrian safety. I want to thank Ms. Cathy Chase and Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety here today for their input and strong support of this bill.

I look forward to discussing all of these issues in today's hearing.

Thank you. I yield back.