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The Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Transportation and Safety this week held a hearing exploring the adoption of technology (<https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings?ID=57A33FDF-7BF6-463A-823A-A768B184DF73>) by transportation agencies and the private sector, and the effects those technologies have on the surface transportation network.

Subcommittee Chair Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) opened the hearing explaining that “Technology is already changing how we move people and goods across this country. And there is potential for new technology to improve safety, efficiency, and mobility across our surface transportation system. But with great potential comes challenges.”



Steve Ingracia testifying for the committee.

Steve Ingracia, Nebraska DOT's deputy director of Technology and Strategic Planning, told the subcommittee about the work going on in his state, in partnership with the DOTs from Wyoming and Utah, to improve mobility and safety across the I-80 corridor. The states are implementing a project funded by a \$2.75 million federal Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1906.cfm>) grant that builds upon Wyoming's connected vehicle

pilot program, which is expected "to increase the flow of information to freight haulers and will ultimately improve safety along I-80," Ingracia said.

"In the transportation field, I believe we are at an inflection point, with multiple technologies advancing quickly and simultaneously. It is only through partnership between the federal government and the states that we will be able to keep pace with these changes," Ingracia said ([https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/\\_cache/files/aa6e6c9a-aada-4ac1-af89-65ccb3622072/8A751D333C89F7517B28F1E1BEE93655.06.25.19-ingracia-testimony.pdf](https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/aa6e6c9a-aada-4ac1-af89-65ccb3622072/8A751D333C89F7517B28F1E1BEE93655.06.25.19-ingracia-testimony.pdf)).

Other hearing witnesses included Shailen Bhatt, president, and chief executive officer at the Intelligent Transportation Society of America; Patrick Duffy, president of Blockchain in Transport Alliance; Brent Hutto, chief relationship officer at Truckstop Alliance; and Ann Schlenker, director of the Center for Transportation Research at the Argonne National Laboratory.

Bhatt used his testimony to outline ITS America's FAST Act reauthorization platform, titled "Moving People, Data and Freight: Safer. Greener. Smarter."


According to Bhatt's written testimony


([https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/\\_cache/files/21f7e399-6595-47d0-a2c5-2cecc7b5b49c/BB2BE782282B9BF4B7B4A4396A22AC8C.06.25.19-bhatt-testimony.pdf](https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/21f7e399-6595-47d0-a2c5-2cecc7b5b49c/BB2BE782282B9BF4B7B4A4396A22AC8C.06.25.19-bhatt-testimony.pdf)), the federal commitment to investment is a key aspect to effectively implementing new technology.

"Only with investment certainty will the nation finally see and benefit from the research and the large-scale transformational deployments of intelligent transportation technologies that will define the way people, goods, services, and information move in the 21st century – and most importantly, finally help begin to reduce the epidemic of fatalities on our roadways," Bhatt said.

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