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Docket Management Facility
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140
Washington, DC 20590-0001

**Re: Removing Regulatory Barriers for Vehicles With Automated Driving Systems
(Docket No. NHTSA-2019-0036)**

On behalf of the 14,000 members of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the largest manufacturing association in the United States representing manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states, the NAM submits these comments in response to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) on Removing Regulatory Barriers for Vehicles With Automated Driving Systems.

Manufacturing employs more than 12 million men and women, contributes over \$2 trillion to the U.S. economy annually, has the largest economic multiplier of any major sector and accounts for more than three-quarters of all private-sector research and development in the nation. The NAM is the powerful voice of the manufacturing community and the leading advocate for a policy agenda that helps manufacturers compete in the global economy and create jobs across the United States.

As automotive technologies continue to advance, manufacturers in the United States continue to take the lead in designing and making products that improve safety and enhance the driving experience. Manufacturers have been early innovators of the technologies and products found in Automated Driving Systems and are building on long-standing research, knowledge and success to advance the safe, timely and widespread deployment of autonomous vehicles. The NAM represents all parts of the passenger and commercial AV supply chain, including original equipment manufacturers, suppliers, and entities involved in the design, testing and manufacturing of ADS, as well as commercial vehicle and multimodal transportation manufacturers and suppliers. The NAM also represents manufacturers who rely on advanced transportation technology to better serve their customers and communities.

The NAM believes vehicles equipped with well-tested and proven ADS will present a new opportunity to make our roadways safer. According to NHTSA data released last year, human error remains the critical cause of 94 percent of vehicle crashes.¹ At every stage of the process, safety continues to be a primary objective for manufacturers that are designing, building, testing, operating and deploying autonomous vehicles. Manufacturers appreciate that NHTSA recognizes the safety improvement potential presented by ADS technologies, and the

¹ <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812506>

need to address barriers for innovation and adoption of these technologies to realize those safety benefits.

The NAM welcomes the opportunity to comment on this ANPRM intended to remove regulatory barriers that would prevent the timely deployment of AVs. The NAM submitted comments in 2016 to the *Federal Automated Vehicle Policy* and in 2017 to *Automated Driving Systems: A Vision for Safety*, as well as in 2018 to the Department of Transportation's request for comment on *Preparing for the Future of Transportation: Automated Vehicles 3.0 (AV 3.0)*. At each stage, the NAM continues to call for ongoing collaboration between industry and government to develop a voluntary, evolving framework that fosters further innovation in autonomous vehicle technology by manufacturers in America. As the NAM's *Building to Win* infrastructure blueprint states:

This is an exciting time for automotive and truck manufacturers as well as suppliers, but to maintain a mantle of leadership, our nation's elected officials and leaders must get safety regulations and the adoption of new technologies right... Also, a federal regulatory approach that considers the industry a technology partner and allows for innovation will be instrumental to the further success of (ADS).²

The NAM has consistently called for guidance that is voluntary and provides flexibility for manufacturers to continue to innovate in ADS and reiterates here its support for that approach taken by DOT with AV 3.0. The NAM further supports the DOT's automation principles outlined in AV 3.0, which include prioritizing safety, committing to remaining technology neutral, modernizing regulations and promoting a consistent regulatory and operational environment. These principles should guide NHTSA's approach in this ANPRM to addressing compliance verification challenges that exist for crash avoidance standards contained in the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards specific to the unique questions presented by ADS technologies.

The NAM supports an approach to solving compliance verification challenges with AVs that provides manufacturers with maximum flexibility to adapt technology and innovate in a quickly evolving and competitive area. In this ANPRM, NHTSA provides six possible approaches to revising crash avoidance test procedures, specifically for ADS vehicles that lack manual controls. Manufacturers support an approach that would permit these various safety testing procedures, or additional new procedures if a more suitable alternative emerges. Keeping the door open to multiple testing procedures both promotes competition and aids innovation for manufacturers developing new products and future technologies in AVs. The growth of AV technology and the accompanying advancement of AV safety goals can best be accomplished through a government-stakeholder partnership that provides a clear federal framework for the testing and deployment of AVs and flexibility for industry in the technical development and design of the technology.

Transformational automotive technologies are advancing around the world, and the United States has an opportunity to lead and maintain global competitiveness by creating an environment that fosters safe and timely adoption of ADS technologies. DOT, NHTSA and the Department's key modal agencies should continue to consider broad regulatory changes necessary to foster the growth of AVs, working with stakeholders to ensure that emerging solutions work for those creating, manufacturing and investing in AV technologies. The NAM remains committed to working with DOT and NHTSA to accomplish these shared goals.

² https://www.nam.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/IIHR.BTW_2019.v08.pdf

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