

Holly Steuart - Comments

I am greatly concerned about motorist safety when sharing the road with semi-tractor trailers or other commercial motor vehicles.

I do not support CMVs that would be operated remotely without a driver in the cab, or any kind of completely automated driverless system.

I do, however, fully endorse trucks being equipped with Automatic Emergency Braking systems.

A very close friend of mine lost her wonderful son and ex-husband in a fiery crash caused by a truck driver who failed to slow in time to avoid the vehicles in front of him.

The driver was not only distracted, but he never adjusted his speed fast enough to counter the extremely dangerous conditions in front of him.

Had his truck been equipped with automatic emergency braking, my friend may not have lost her precious son.

However, as much as I want to see lawmakers protect the public by mandating emergency braking systems on big tractor-trailers, I do NOT support driverless automation systems.

Only a human driver can be perceptive enough to understand the change in road or traffic conditions, sometimes subtle, but potentially life changing, nonetheless.

Completely autonomous vehicles can never advance far enough to take these human perceptions into account on the road.

Even though it may seem contradictory to support emergency braking systems but not automated driverless systems, the two concepts are very different.

Yes, humans make errors.

But emergency braking systems can and do work...if the truck companies would embrace that technology instead of lamenting the cost.

Why would we rush past driver-assisted emergency braking systems to push too early for completely driverless automation?

No devices are foolproof and no humans are perfect.

But before we unleash automated driverless trucks on our roads, let's focus instead on assisting qualified and experienced human drivers in the truck to be better and safer drivers on the job.

Someone else's son is on the road right now. Maybe it's your son.

He deserves to arrive at his destination alive and assisted emergency braking can give him that chance.

But If the trucking industry races to adopt driverless technology -- and that technology fails -- the same young man would be a casualty of automated driverless technology embraced far too fast and far too soon.

That's too high a price to pay.