AV TEST Initiative Launch Remarks

James Owens, Deputy Administrator

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AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Secretary Chao, thank you for your leadership and commitment to ensuring that the United States continues to lead in the innovation and development of transportation technologies. As you frequently say, safety is our number one priority – I couldn't agree more.

Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us today for this important announcement. As the Secretary said, we are launching a first-of-its-kind program to promote transparency, safety, and public engagement in the development and testing of automated driving systems.

Many innovators are testing the vehicles and systems that may lay the groundwork for a revolution in how we travel. However, there's been no one-stop, centralized, nationwide source for information and transparency about the safe testing and development underway – until now.

The Automated Vehicle Transparency and Engagement for Safe Testing, or AV TEST, Initiative is the first platform connecting the public, manufacturers, developers, operators, and all levels of government to voluntarily share information about the on-road testing and development of prototype automated driving systems.

We are proud to announce the first companies and states who are joining us in this important initiative:

Nine companies have signed on so far: Beep, Cruise, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Local Motors, Navya, Nuro, Toyota, Uber, and Waymo.

Eight states – California, Florida, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah – have committed to the initiative.

The AV TEST Initiative is open to all stakeholders involved in the development and testing of vehicles equipped with automated driving systems in the United States, and we look forward to having many more partners join us in this important transparency, public education, and engagement project.

Educating drivers about automated driving systems is important, because there are many misconceptions about vehicles equipped with these technologies, their availability, and their capabilities. For starters, there are no vehicles with automated driving systems available for sale to the public today. Any vehicle the public can buy today cannot drive itself and requires an active, attentive, and fully engaged driver ready to act at any time.

What companies are testing are prototype vehicles equipped with automated driving systems on public roads in limited areas and for limited use. Since October 21, 2016, NHTSA has granted permission for the temporary authorization of 87 automated driving system-equipped vehicles for testing and limited demonstrations in 89 different projects in 20 states.

As the nation's highway traffic safety agency, NHTSA is particularly interested in the safe development and testing of automated driving systems. These systems hold the promise to one day help prevent

fatal crashes, save lives, and reduce crash severity. These technologies may also improve mobility for underserved communities, including people with disabilities and older adults.

Once these technologies have been safely tested and proven, public trust will be key to their adoption – and fulfilling their lifesaving potential. The AV TEST Initiative will provide a critical resource to educate and engage the public about these vehicles, the scope of on-road testing, and the stakeholders involved.

The AV TEST Initiative will provide an online, public-facing platform for sharing automated driving system on-road testing activities and other relevant information at the local, State, and national levels.

Participating companies and governments can use online mapping tools to show on-road testing locations. They can also choose to share testing activity data, such as vehicle types and uses, dates, frequency, vehicle counts, and routes.

Meanwhile, state and local governments may provide information about vehicle operation regulations, emergency response plans, and legislation.

It will also include a series of meetings across the country to improve transparency and safety in the development and testing of Automated Driving System-equipped vehicles and promote public engagement.

Companies and governments are encouraged to join this voluntary program to show the public their commitment to transparency and education as this technology continues to develop.

One day, fleets of fully automated vehicles may be broadly deployed across the country to drive you to work, take your elderly parents to the doctor, or deliver packages to your front door.

That day isn't here yet, but the AV TEST Initiative will play an important role in improving transparency and public understanding as we work toward this exciting possibility.