May 4, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thanks to your leadership, your Administration is poised to bring to fruition years of work to build a communications network that allows vehicles on the road to communicate with other road users and with surrounding infrastructure to help avoid collisions, injuries, and fatalities.

Last week, you received a letter from the cable industry and additional stakeholders suggesting that the transportation sector refuses to share the 5.9 GHz band used for connected vehicle technology with Wi-Fi. Nothing could be further from the truth. The transportation sector has been actively engaged with the Wi-Fi industry to determine the best method for robustly sharing the band while maintaining the integrity and reliability of previously permitted Dedicated Short Range Communication (DSRC) systems and ensuring that the vast amount of resources already invested are not wasted. These efforts include the testing of at least two potential sharing solutions that the Federal Communications Commission, the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration plan to assess this summer.

We support spectrum sharing in areas where it is technically feasible and will preserve both life-saving DSRC technology and ensure the protection of the existing Fixed Satellite Service operations in the 5.9 GHz band. In fact, the transportation and satellite industries have already successfully completed a sharing regime in this band reflecting our mutual commitment to operate our respective services on a non-interfering basis. At the urging of the Senate Commerce Committee, the FCC was directed to convene stakeholder sessions with all industry sectors in the relevant band and the appropriate federal agencies to work on a solution. Through such a multi-agency process, your Administration is moving toward that end, but is now being asked to delay action and revamp the DSRC rules and ecosystem. Changing the DSRC rules and ecosystem at this late stage would be an enormous setback for highway safety and delay the deployment of DSRC, thereby significantly limiting the potential of this technology to reduce injuries and fatalities on our roads.

In 2014, there were 32,675 fatalities in vehicle crashes, including 4,884 pedestrians and 726 cyclists. The National Safety Council estimates that roadway fatalities will increase to 38,300 in 2015, which is an 8 percent increase in one year. Of the thousands of deaths on the roads each year, over 90 percent are caused by driver error. Many of these errors could be avoided or mitigated by the deployment of DSRC, and the Department of Transportation has made it a priority to accelerate this potentially life-saving technology.

Your comments last year at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center clearly communicated your understanding of the need to ensure a safer and more efficient highway system. This past December, when you signed into law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, you adopted several new federal policies that encourage state highway departments and other surface transportation agencies to invest in DSRC systems. DOT's Smart City Challenge also promotes DSRC as a key component to improve transportation. These policies will assist and expand the many DSRC-based projects being launched around the country.

DSRC systems have moved from the test bed to the roadside, into vehicles and, based on recently-completed work, smartphones used by pedestrians. Michigan is expanding the Ann Arbor Safety Pilot across its southeastern region to create a connected vehicle corridor. In San Francisco, 1,500 DSRC units are currently installed at intersections and on city buses to allow them to navigate through traffic with additional safety benefits. In lower Manhattan and Brooklyn, a test bed is nearing completion that will use Vehicle-to-Vehicle and Vehicle-to-Pedestrian DSRC transmissions to protect vehicle occupants and vulnerable pedestrians, such as highway workers. Additional DSRC systems for safety and mobility are being deployed in Tampa and in Wyoming. The New York Thruway is also using DSRC to ensure that freight vehicles are identified and using the highway legally and safely. Finally, General Motors will install and deploy DSRC technology in their production model year 2017 Cadillac CTS vehicles.

We look forward to reviewing the upcoming National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to mandate DSRC technology be installed in new passenger vehicles. Those asking for delay seek to reconfigure the 5.9 GHz DSRC band in a way that would impair safety-critical applications and jeopardize their public benefits. This would sweep away more than a decade of research and development, as well as delay for perhaps another decade DSRC's life saving benefits.

One of the most – if not the most – significant advances in vehicle safety is now coming into existence. We urge you to stay the course and complete the action your Administration has undertaken to improve the safety of drivers and passengers on America's roadways.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
Association of Global Automakers, Inc.
Intelligent Transportation Society of America
AECOM Technology Corporation
American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials
American Automobile Association
American Automotive Policy Council
American Center for Mobility
American Highway Users Alliance
American Public Transportation Association
Arizona Department of Transportation

Associations of Critical Care Transport
Auto Care Association
California Department of Transportation
Carnegie Mellon University - University Transportation Center
CAVita
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Denso International America, Inc.
Econolite Group Inc.
Faraday Future
Ford Motor Company
General Motors Company
HNTB Corporation
Honda North America, Inc.
Institute of Transportation Engineers
Intelsat Corporation
International Academies of Emergency Dispatch
International Association of Fire Chiefs
International Municipal Signal Association
International Trauma Life Support
Kapsch TrafficCom USA
Maricopa County, Arizona Department of Transportation
Michigan Department of Transportation
Mohaddes Group
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
Motorcycle Industry Council
National Association of Emergency Medical Service Educators
National Association of State Emergency Medical Officials
National Association of EMS Physicians
National Safety Council
National Sheriffs Association
Panasonic Corporation of North America
Savari Networks
SES Americom, Inc.
Specialty Equipment Market Association
Subaru of America
The Paramedic Foundation
Toyota Motor North America
Truck and Engine Manufacturers Association
University of Michigan Mobility Transformation Center
Valeo North America, Inc.
Volkswagen Group of America
Volvo Group North America
WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff

cc: Anthony Foxx, Secretary, Department of Transportation
Penny Pritzker, Secretary, Department of Commerce
Shaun Donovan, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Jeffrey Zients, Director, National Economic Council
John P. Holdren, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy
Dr. Mark Rosekind, Administrator, National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
Lawrence Strickling, Administrator, National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Tom Wheeler, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
Mignon Clyburn, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
Ajit Pai, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
Michael O'Rielly, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission