

November 14, 2017

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

RE: U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration,
Response to Request for Comment on 49 CFR Chapter V, [Docket No. NHTSA-2017-0082],
Automated Driving Systems: A Vision for Safety

Dear Docket Clerk:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) welcomes the opportunity to offer comments on the proposed *Automated Driving Systems: A Vision for Safety*. Maryland is open for business and eager to realize the life-saving, and economic benefits of the innovative technology of connected and automated vehicles (CAV), while keeping the safety of the traveling public as a first priority.

In fact, after the release of USDOT's *Federal Automated Vehicles Policy* in September 2016, Maryland worked to establish a permit system and is encouraging any entities that may want to collaborate on CAV, to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) as the first step. The EOI opens the door to conversations with all relevant agencies that might need to be engaged. Then if needed and when ready, MDOT helps the applicants through the permit process to test SAE Levels 3, 4, and/or 5 automated systems on public roadways in Maryland. As suggested by federal guidance, Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration is acting as the designated lead agency to facilitate the EOI and permit process, and to co-chair the State's *Connected and Automated Vehicles Working Group*.

In 2015, Maryland Transportation Secretary Pete K. Rahn established the *Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) Working Group* as the central point of coordination for the development and deployment of emerging CAV technologies in Maryland. The Working Group handles strategic planning for MDOT concerning connected and automated vehicles. The group includes a diverse membership of transportation stakeholders, including elected officials, state and local agency representatives, highway safety organizations, representatives from the private sector and automotive industry. Over the last two years, the group has worked to evaluate the latest research, track federal and state laws, policies and programs, and coordinate with other agencies, organizations, and businesses to set the course for the future of automated and connected vehicles in Maryland. While not reflective of the entire Connected and Automated Vehicles Working Group, our submission does incorporate comments from several members of this group.

On behalf of the MDOT and several members of the Maryland Connected and Automated Vehicles Working Group, we offer the following comments on the proposed *Automated Driving Systems: A Vision for Safety (Guidance)*:

- I. The safety of all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists should be the absolute and immovable priority as the *Guidance* is refined, implemented, and revised. MDOT is fully supportive of all safety recommendations for automated driving systems (ADS) as outlined in the *Guidance*, and agrees with the premise to encourage development of the technology with the potential of enormous benefits for safety, mobility, and sustainability.
- II. MDOT appreciates that NHTSA's efforts to date have been supportive and positively affect how ADS will be integrated in our systems, including in the fields of Commercial Vehicles, to ensure integration of all ADS capabilities into our transportation systems management resources.
- III. MDOT suggests more focus to address the lower levels of automation (Level 1 – 2), including some of the advanced driver assistance systems already being deployed by automakers today.
- IV. MDOT supports NHTSA's emphasis on common terminology, and reliance on the SAE J3016 taxonomy of definitions.
- V. NHTSA should consider including as part of data collection, data not only safety focused, but also data that would help state and federal agencies implement efficient mobility strategies, including information linked to vehicle operations, interaction with infrastructure (e.g. speed of data transfers), and route information.
- VI. MDOT encourages NHTSA's continued support to allow for transparent sharing of ADS data for better understanding and to benefit roadway safety.
- VII. NHTSA should address the issue of identification of vehicle capability, upgrades by the manufacturer or owner, and ADS status for purposes of vehicles inspections (regular and/or at point-of-sale), and for crash site response and reporting – to support its ongoing work related to ADS and law enforcement / first responders.
- VIII. MDOT encourages NHTSA to work with SAE and entities engaging in testing or deployment to develop a standardized method of returning ADSs to a safe state immediately after being involved in a crash. If each entity establishes a unique safe mode process, public safety will be reduced as emergency and first responders will be challenged with identifying the vehicle and locating the correct safe mode process prior to beginning rescue operations.
- IX. MDOT suggests attention be given to address the insurance requirements for vehicles as ADS begins to penetrate the market, and possible guidance to encourage uniformity among states.

- X. Given our responsibility for protecting public safety we suggest NHTSA provide a more systematic safety self-assessment mechanism for entities to submit information. This will serve to better inform States in advance of – or during – testing with specific vehicles, manufacturers, or organizations. MDOT believes an emphasis on transparency would help to ensure the public's buy-in and support for ADS.

- XI. NHTSA should consider an update to the Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC) that considers and addresses issues unique to ADS, and is coordinated with the provisions of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). These updates, or other guidance or model policy, should include standardized and clarifying definitions and any infrastructure guidance for safe operation of ADS.

Thank you for providing us an opportunity to comment on the proposed Automated Driving System.

Sincerely,



James F. Ports, Jr.
Deputy Secretary of Maryland Department of Transportation



Christine Nizer
Administrator of Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration