



September 25, 2017

The Honorable John Thune Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is pleased to support the AV START Act of 2017. AAPD is a convener, connector, and catalyst for change, increasing the political and economic power of people with disabilities. We urge the committee to promptly move this bill through its process to expedite the Senate's passage of this important and transformative legislation.

People with disabilities suffer greatly from a lack of reliable and accessible transportation options. Autonomous vehicles have the potential to transform how Americans, with and without disabilities, move about their communities. The potential to save lives by reducing automobile accidents due to human error creates an extraordinarily compelling motive for public policy to embrace the use of these vehicles on public roads. In doing so, people with disabilities must be able to enjoy these safety benefits along with the increased mobility that comes with this innovation.

To ensure that all Americans with disabilities benefit from this legislation, we urge the committee to retain two aspects of the draft legislation. No state should be allowed to discriminate against a person with a disability by requiring them to secure an operator's license or undergo a training program designed to demonstrate competency. As important, is the need to expedite the design of a fully accessible, fully autonomous vehicle. The working group created in the draft legislation is an essential first step in this process.

AAPD extends its appreciation to the Chairman and Ranking member for their leadership on this issue at this crucial time. Our organization is prepared to work with all stakeholders to advance

the vision for accessibility captured in the legislation. Please call on the organization at any time for support and assistance with the passage of this legislation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Berger', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Helena Berger  
President & CEO