

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

March 2, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney:

As you prepare the President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2018, we write to urge the inclusion of funding within the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's account to support the safe testing and deployment of connected and automated vehicle (CAV) technologies at federally-designated proving grounds.

The auto industry is in the midst of a seismic technological shift that will revolutionize the transportation of people and goods in our lifetime. Connected and self-driving cars can reduce dramatically the more than 35,000 lives lost on our roads and highways every year and transform fundamentally the way we get around.

Ensuring that American innovators can safely develop and implement this technology will not only save lives but also solidify our nation's position as the world leader in the future of mobility. It is critical that the Federal government play a leadership role in ensuring that CAV technologies are safely developed and tested in a thorough and thoughtful manner, aligned with voluntary industry standards.

The Department of Transportation, recognizing this urgent need, last year solicited proposals from facilities across the country to be designated as USDOT Automated Vehicle Proving Grounds. The intent was to form an initial network of proving grounds focused on the advancement of automated vehicle technology.

After evaluating more than 60 applicants under a rigorous and detailed set of selection criteria, USDOT chose ten proving grounds with complementary features and capabilities. Together, those facilities collectively form a federal Community of Practice around the safe testing and deployment of CAV technologies.

Identifying and selecting these initial proving grounds was a crucial first step, but USDOT must now work quickly to ensure that testing and evaluation at these facilities can begin as soon as possible. Technology in this area is changing rapidly, and only through thorough testing can we both encourage innovation and assure public confidence in these revolutionary technologies.

We therefore urge that the 2018 budget include funding of \$200 million for these USDOT-designated proving grounds. This is the same amount requested in the 2017 budget for autonomous vehicle research. USDOT should be directed to use such funds to support the development of these ten proving grounds and to promote the creation and sharing of best practices for safely conducting testing and operations, which will accelerate the pace of safe deployment.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to working with you in your new position on this and other national priorities.

Sincerely,



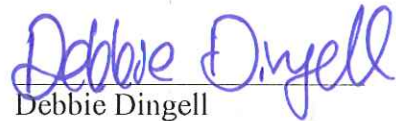
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

CC: Secretary Elaine L. Chao, U.S. Department of Transportation