

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2025

The Honorable Jonathan Morrison
Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Morrison:

Congratulations on your appointment as Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). We look forward to collaborating closely with you to fully implement the Honoring Abbas Family Legacy to Terminate Drunk Driving Act (HALT Act) — Section 24220 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). As you know, the HALT Act requires the inclusion of advanced drunk and impaired driving prevention technology in all new passenger vehicles, technology that can detect a driver’s impairment or prevent a vehicle from operating if the driver is intoxicated. This is one of the most significant opportunities in a generation to save lives on our nation’s roads.

We appreciated your responses to questions during your Senate confirmation hearing in which you detailed your intent to make this drunk driving prevention rulemaking a priority.^{[1][2]} We hope that your continued interest in roadway safety and your background in technology will position you well to advance this effort.

Under statute, NHTSA was required to issue a final rule by November 15, 2024. That deadline passed without action, triggering the requirement for an annual report to Congress detailing the state of deployment, the reasons for delay, and an anticipated timeline for issuing a Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS). While NHTSA submitted its first report on December 13, 2024, it lacked the legally required timeline and offered no meaningful next steps under the “Anticipated Timeline for FMVSS” heading.

1 Morrison, J. Democratic Questions for the Record. In Full Committee Nominations Hearing for Modal Administrators of the Department of Transportation. 119th Cong. *Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation*. 16 Jul. 2025. Retrieved from: <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/16B8B855-6A1F-4CE1-9096-CF1316775235>.

2 Full Committee Nominations Hearing for Modal Administrators of the Department of Transportation. *Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation*. 119th Congress. 16 Jul. 2025. Retrieved from: https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2025/7/nominations-hearing-for-modal-administrators-of-the-department-of-transportation_2.

The stakes of protecting lives and keeping our roads safe have never been higher. According to NHTSA, 12,429 Americans were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes in 2023 — an average of 34 deaths every day, or one life lost every 42 minutes. Over the past decade, drunk driving has claimed 11,000 lives annually, accounting for 30 percent of all traffic fatalities. The economic toll exceeds \$68.9 billion each year. Every one of these tragedies can be preventable.

Extensive research confirms the lifesaving potential of advanced impaired driving prevention systems. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) estimates that equipping all new vehicles with these systems could save more than 10,000 lives annually and prevent over 25 percent of U.S. roadway fatalities.³ Recently, the IIHS announced that vehicle technology that can detect certain types of risky driver behavior will be added to the requirements for its safety awards.⁴ This further underscores that this technology is not hypothetical — it is real, achievable, and long overdue.

We respectfully request that NHTSA publish a revised anticipated timeline for the HALT Act rulemaking, including details for proposal, comment, and final rule issuance and publicly reaffirm the agency’s commitment to deploying this technology as a top priority. To that end, we also request a meeting with you to discuss how Congress and NHTSA can work together to move this rulemaking forward without further delay.

Your leadership can ensure that NHTSA meets its obligations, provides Congress and the public with consistent, transparent updates, and advances this safety-critical technology towards deployment as swiftly as possible.

Implementing the HALT Act will be a defining moment in public safety, and one that can end the preventable tragedy of drunk and impaired driving, leaving a lasting legacy of safer roads for every American.

Thank you, and we look forward to working with you to make that vision a reality.

Sincerely,

³ “IIHS award criteria will soon include features to address risky driving.” *Insurance Institute for Highway Safety*. 9 Sept. 2025. Retrieved from: <https://www.iihs.org/news/detail/iihs-award-criteria-will-soon-include-features-to-address-risky-driving>.

⁴ *ibid*

Debbie Dingell

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Member of Congress

Ben Ray Lujan

Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator