



September 11, 2018

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

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

RE: S. 1885, *AV Start Act*

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

On behalf of our membership across the country, the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) writes in support of S. 1885, the *AV Start Act*. The *AV Start Act* will ensure that Americans can tap into the vast potential of autonomous vehicles to reduce negative environmental impacts, improve mobility and increase safety on our nation's roads.

Advancements in unmanned systems and autonomous technology are happening very quickly, and the impact of this innovation on our economy, lifestyle and society is tremendous. As the world's largest non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of unmanned systems and robotics, we have witnessed the technological advancements of the autonomous vehicle industry firsthand. In Florida, for example, the community of Babcock Ranch hopes to soon implement a regular autonomous shuttle service. Eventually, that shuttle could serve more than 50,000 residents, including many who would otherwise have limited mobility.

Like many emerging technologies, autonomous vehicles can complement the efforts of today's workers and create new types of jobs and services. Nine years ago, for example, an Illinois entrepreneur launched AutonomouStuff to help companies obtain access to the technologies they needed to expand. Since then, AutonomouStuff is 300 employees strong, has offices on three continents and continues to develop innovative products, including off-road autonomous vehicles, for its customers.

It isn't just businesses using autonomous technology that stand to gain from the passage of the *AV Start Act* – the American economy as a whole will see the benefits. A [recent report](#) released by Secure America's Future Energy (SAFE) predicts the widespread adoption of AVs could lead to nearly \$800 billion dollars in annual social and economic benefits by 2050. The cumulative benefits could amount to between \$3 and \$6 trillion dollars. The same report also predicts that people in some economically depressed regions could see improved access to larger job markets, as autonomous vehicles help increase mobility and travel options where they may not currently exist.

Autonomous vehicles hold the potential to save tens of thousands of lives on our nation's highways every year, as well as improve mobility and spur enormous economic growth. We thank you for your work in passing the *AV Start Act* out of Committee and encourage you to continue working towards a swift passage of the bill in the full Senate. We greatly appreciate your consideration of AUVSI's views and look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian P. Wynne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian P. Wynne
President and CEO

CC: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Minority Leader
The Honorable Gary Peters, bill co-sponsor
The Honorable Roy Blunt, bill co-sponsor
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, bill co-sponsor
The Honorable Roger Wicker, bill co-sponsor