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**Heller to Department of Transportation: Choose Nevada as Location for National Dialogue on Autonomous Vehicles**

*“Nevada Has Been a Leader in Paving the Way for the Safe Deployment of Autonomous Vehicles”*

**WASHINGTON –**U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) today urged the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to strongly consider Nevada as a future location for a national dialogue meeting on autonomous vehicles. A member of the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, Heller has been [a strong proponent of policies that would ensure Nevada remains an innovative leader in driverless technologies](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=84F6C35D-EEC8-4EB3-995D-F07E7C79056A).

In a letter to DOT Secretary Elaine L. Chao, Heller made the case for why Nevada is well-prepared to contribute to the advancement of this technology that could transform safety and mobility for communities across America.

“*There is extensive involvement in autonomous vehicles from local governments, universities, and others in Nevada*,” **Heller wrote.**“*Hosting a national dialogue in my home state would provide FHWA an opportunity to hear from industry stakeholders and local government and transit officials about how they are managing the testing and deployment of autonomous vehicles, especially in areas with a high volume of pedestrian traffic like the Las Vegas strip or around the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) campu*s.”

In 2011, Nevada became the first state to pass autonomous vehicle legislation that paved the way for testing. Since then, autonomous cars, semi-trucks, and buses have all been tested in the state. To build on this success, Nevada passed legislation for full-implementation of autonomous vehicles for commercial use. The Silver State is also home to automotive manufacturer Tesla, which is developing an autonomous vehicle and produces electric vehicles. At a [Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee hearing](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=84F6C35D-EEC8-4EB3-995D-F07E7C79056Ahttps://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=84F6C35D-EEC8-4EB3-995D-F07E7C79056A) earlier this year, Heller explained why [Nevada continues to be at the forefront of innovative technologies in the automotive industry](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2016/3/heller-emphasizes-nevada-s-leadership-in-autonomous-vehicle-technologies) and discussed how self-driving cars could help make Nevada’s roadways safer.

**The full text of the letter can be found below:**

Dear Secretary Chao,

As a member of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, I request that you consider Nevada as your next location for the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA’s) national dialogue meetings on autonomous vehicles.  From the infancy of this technology, Nevada has been a leader in paving the way for the safe deployment of autonomous vehicles and can offer a diverse group of stakeholders to engage in this national dialogue.

Nevada’s leadership on autonomous vehicles is clear. It was the first state to pass legislation allowing for testing and licensing of autonomous vehicles, and Google was the first in the country to receive and utilize a testing license from Nevada.  Currently, both northern and southern Nevada are developing and operating autonomous shuttles. The Nevada Legislature weighed in on establishing insurance requirements for autonomous vehicles and passed legislation in 2017 that provided a pathway for full implementation of autonomous vehicles in Nevada — from testing to deployment — for personal and commercial use.  Furthermore, the Nevada Center of Advanced Mobility (CAM) was established as an initiative between the Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED), the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and the NV Department of Motor Vehicles to develop cohesive policy, standards, legislation, and innovations for bringing innovation to reality.

Nevada is well prepared to contribute to the advancement of this technology that could transform safety and mobility for communities across America.  There is extensive involvement in autonomous vehicles from local governments, universities, and others in Nevada. Hosting a national dialogue in my home state would provide FHWA an opportunity to hear from industry stakeholders and local government and transit officials about how they are managing the testing and deployment of autonomous vehicles, especially in areas with a high volume of pedestrian traffic like the Las Vegas strip or around the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) campus. Again, I strongly encourage you to consider Nevada as your next location for a national dialogue and stand ready to work with you to make this happen and connect you with any relevant individuals in the state.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to hearing from you and continuing our work together to safely promote and advance autonomous vehicles.

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