



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

Subcommittee Markup of:

*Committee Print of the “Surface Transportation Research and Development Act of 2015”
H.R. 2886, the “Future Transportation Research and Innovation for Prosperity Act”*

Chairman Smith: I thank Chairwoman Comstock for holding this markup on surface transportation research and development that helps communities throughout America.

When President Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act, it was hard to imagine the affect it would have on our country. Continuing advances in transportation research and development ensure that federal surface transportation programs will continue to boost the economy, and the safety and quality of life in our cities, our suburbs and our rural communities.

High priority R&D will help create autonomous automobiles and improve crash avoidance and other safety technologies. It also will lead to better roads to allow Americans to navigate our highways more easily and comfortably.

Nationally, we can encourage economic growth and job creation if we enhance our transportation infrastructure. This makes the Science Committee’s jurisdiction over the research, development and technology programs at the Department of Transportation particularly relevant.

Innovations that result from federal research and development efforts, in conjunction with State and local efforts, ultimately benefit the constituents we represent in Congress. The two bills being marked up today supplement each other and address some of the most pressing transportation issues our country faces. These include congestion and safety concerns.

I also appreciate both bills’ focus on next generation research relative to automated vehicles. Not only will the results of such R&D help mitigate traffic and congestion issues, but they also will help improve technologies focused on safety and crash avoidance.

These issues were discussed during the hearing the Research and Technology Subcommittee held in June, which led to the development of the bills before us today. The significance and value of our efforts is also shared and acknowledged by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which has general jurisdiction over transportation issues.

We are fortunate that both the Chair and Ranking Member of this Subcommittee, who are the sponsors of today’s bills, also sit on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

This provides them, and this Committee, with the opportunity to advance today’s bills in the context of the larger transportation authorization bill that Congress is working to enact.

I thank Chairwoman Comstock and Ranking Member Lipinski for taking the initiative on their bills and urge my colleagues to support them.