

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10051

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to conduct a study on the effect of driver-controlled technology in motor vehicles with respect to severe traffic injuries and traffic fatalities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 25, 2024

Mr. MULLIN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to conduct a study on the effect of driver-controlled technology in motor vehicles with respect to severe traffic injuries and traffic fatalities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Driver Technology and
5 Pedestrian Safety Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. DRIVER-CONTROLLED TECHNOLOGY SAFETY**
2 **STUDY.**

3 (a) DRIVER-CONTROLLED TECHNOLOGY SAFETY
4 STUDY AGREEMENT.—Subject to the availability of appro-
5 priations, not later than 3 months after the date of the
6 enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation
7 shall seek to enter into an agreement with the National
8 Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine—

9 (1) to conduct a study on the effect of driver-
10 controlled technology with respect to severe traffic
11 injuries and traffic fatalities, including severe inju-
12 ries and fatalities of pedestrians, bicyclists, and
13 other vulnerable road users; and

14 (2) to prepare the recommendations described
15 in section 3.

16 (b) PERIOD OF TIME TO BE STUDIED.—The Sec-
17 retary of Transportation shall determine the period of
18 time to be studied under subsection (a), which shall be
19 a period of time that began not later than 10 years before
20 the date on which the Secretary enters into the agreement
21 under subsection (a).

22 (c) INFORMATION.—The study described in sub-
23 section (a) shall address the following information:

24 (1) The prevalence and characteristics of touch
25 screen-based systems.

1 (2) The impact on driver distraction, property
2 damage, severe traffic injuries, and traffic fatalities
3 as a result of the following:

4 (A) Replacing tactile motor vehicle controls
5 with touch screen-based systems.

6 (B) The characteristics of such systems,
7 including brightness and size.

8 (C) Driver-controlled technology that is not
9 a touch screen-based system.

10 (3) The user interface designs of touch screen-
11 based systems and other driver-controlled tech-
12 nology, and the effect of those designs on driver be-
13 havior.

14 (4) A comparison of—

15 (A) the extent to which viewing or manipu-
16 lating a touch screen-based system while driving
17 a motor vehicle results in a severe traffic injury
18 or a traffic fatality; and

19 (B) the extent to which viewing or manipu-
20 lating a smartphone, other than a smartphone
21 that is projecting a user interface to a touch
22 screen-based system, while driving a motor vehi-
23 cle results in a severe traffic injury or a traffic
24 fatality.

1 (5) Whether the time of day and other road
2 conditions, including traffic, weather, and the num-
3 ber of commercial motor vehicles on a road, have a
4 significant effect on the incidence of severe traffic
5 injuries and traffic fatalities, the extent of any ef-
6 fect, the likely reasons for any effect, whether any
7 effect varies between the United States and other
8 countries, and any changes to touch screen-based
9 systems and other driver-controlled technology that
10 may help mitigate any effect.

11 (6) Any other information that is relevant to
12 the study, which may include a previous study.

13 **SEC. 3. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

14 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 24 months after the
15 date on which the Secretary of Transportation enters into
16 an agreement under section 2, the Secretary shall—

17 (1) submit to Congress a report that includes
18 the findings of the study under section 2; and

19 (2) publish the report on the public website of
20 the Department of Transportation.

21 (b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 2 months
22 after the date on which the Secretary of Transportation
23 satisfies the requirements of subsection (a), the Secretary
24 shall submit to Congress recommendations that are based

1 on the findings of the study under section 2, including
2 recommendations—

3 (1) to reduce severe traffic injuries and traffic
4 fatalities; and

5 (2) to change the Fatality Analysis Reporting
6 System, the National Occupant Protection Use Sur-
7 veys, and the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Cri-
8 teria of the National Highway Traffic Safety Admin-
9 istration, or another set of Federal surveys, to col-
10 lect as much data as practicable with respect to the
11 use of a touch screen-based system while driving a
12 motor vehicle and the use of a smartphone while
13 driving a motor vehicle, given the variation in the
14 methods of data collection by States and units of
15 local government.

16 (c) CATEGORIES.—In submitting the recommenda-
17 tions described in subsection (b), the Secretary of Trans-
18 portation—

19 (1) may not include a recommendation that
20 only restates an existing requirement for a depart-
21 ment or agency of the Federal Government; and

22 (2) shall divide the recommendations into the
23 following categories:

24 (A) Any recommendations that a depart-
25 ment or agency of the Federal Government, in-

cluding the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, may implement under the existing authority of the department or agency, including any authority of the department or agency to develop or update guidance or standards on motor vehicle technology.

(B) Any recommendations that would require the enactment of Federal law for a department or agency of the Federal Government, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, to implement.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE.**—The term “commercial motor vehicle” means any of the following:

(A) A commercial motor vehicle, as that term is defined under section 31132 of title 49, United States Code.

(B) A vehicle owned or operated by a transportation network company, as that term is defined under section 346 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328; 10 U.S.C. 113 note).

1 (2) DRIVER-CONTROLLED TECHNOLOGY.—The
2 term “driver-controlled technology”—

3 (A) means the controls and functions of a
4 motor vehicle that are engaged at the option of
5 a driver of the motor vehicle;

6 (B) includes the functions that are related
7 to driving, are not related to the safe operation
8 of the motor vehicle, and do not involve the use
9 of a system that is required by law;

10 (C) includes a touch screen-based system;
11 and

12 (D) does not include any functions that are
13 engaged by default as the motor vehicle is driv-
14 en, such as automatic braking, cameras, and
15 dynamic lighting.

16 (3) MOTOR VEHICLE.—The term “motor vehi-
17 cle” means a passenger motor vehicle, as that term
18 is defined under section 32101 of title 49, United
19 States Code.

20 (4) TACTILE MOTOR VEHICLE CONTROL.—The
21 term “tactile motor vehicle control” means a knob,
22 a switch, a trackpad, or another physical control,
23 that is in a motor vehicle and is not a touch screen.

1 (5) TOUCH SCREEN-BASED SYSTEM.—The term
2 “touch screen-based system” means a computer
3 that—

4 (A) is in a motor vehicle;

5 (B) controls the functions of the motor ve-
6 hicle, including the infotainment functions of
7 the motor vehicle;

8 (C) has a primary user interface that con-
9 sists of a touch screen and on-screen software
10 controls;

11 (D) may be able to be manipulated by tac-
12 tile motor vehicle controls; and

13 (E) may be able to display a user interface
14 that is projected from a smartphone.

15 **SEC. 5. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**

16 (a) REGULATIONS.—This Act shall not be construed
17 to preclude or delay the promulgation of any regulation
18 required or authorized by law.

19 (b) DEFERENCE.—If a court finds that a term used
20 in this Act is ambiguous, the court shall defer to a reason-
21 able interpretation of the term by the Secretary of Trans-
22 portation.

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