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Thursday, January 14, 2016



Obama's \$4 Billion Plan for Self-Driving Cars Will Make Google Very Happy

M. Bergen, Jan 14 "The Obama Administration has seen the self-driving future, and it's jumping aboard. At the Detroit auto show on Thursday morning, U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx will unveil a plan to develop a national blueprint for autonomous driving technology within the next six months. He will also announce that President Obama is planning to insert \$4 billion into the 2017 budget for a 10-year plan to support and "accelerate" vehicle automation projects.

"We are on the cusp of a new era in automotive technology with enormous potential to save lives, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and transform mobility for the American people," Secretary Foxx said in a statement. ...**But here's the part of Foxx's talk that really matters for Google: These national rules will allow fully driverless cars...**" [Read More](#) *Hmmm... A few months ago it was \$42M for Connected Vehicles. Today it is 100x for automated vehicles! Finally Secretary Foxx.. "YES! YES! JESUS H. TAP-DANCING CHRIST... I HAVE SEEN THE LIGHT" (Blue Brothers) Yea!!!! :-)* *Alain*



Secretary Foxx Unveils President Obama's FY17 Budget Proposal of Nearly \$4 Billion for Automated Vehicles and Announces DOT Initiatives to Accelerate Vehicle Safety Innovations -

Press Release, Jan 14 "In his last State of the Union address, President Obama signaled his intent to invest in a 21st century transportation system. U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today revealed part of the president's proposal: a 10-year, nearly \$4 billion investment to accelerate the development and adoption of safe vehicle automation through real-world pilot projects. [Read more](#)



U.S. Department of Transportation and Mobileye Partner to Equip Smart City Challenge Winner with Crash Avoidance Technology

Press Release, Jan 7, "U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx today announced the latest partnership in the Smart City Challenge; the winning city's public bus system will receive the installation of Mobileye's Shield +™ technology on every bus. This is in addition to U.S. DOT's award of up to \$40 million and an award of up to \$10 million from the Challenge's launch partner, Vulcan Philanthropy.

Mobileye's Shield +™ driver assistance safety technology is designed to enable bus drivers in the selected city to avoid and mitigate imminent collisions and protect road users including cyclists,

pedestrians, and motorcyclists...." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...This is very interesting and certainly a first step in using technology to help bus drivers better perform their very difficult and stressful job; however, one would hope that a truly "Smart City" would go beyond simply providing technology that warns the bus driver of an impending crash to one that automatically avoids the crash (and without harming standing and (unbelted) seated passengers riding the bus). Hopefully the winning "Smart City" (and all other, apparently, "not-so-smart cities") will learn from the on-going demos that WSTIP, Munich Re and Rosco are conducting in the State of Washington. :-)* Alain



Google Self-Driving Car Testing Report on Disengagements of Autonomous Mode

Dec 2015 12, "In accordance with regulations issued by the the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Google Auto LLC ("Google") submits this report of disengagements from autonomous mode that have occurred when operating its self-driving cars (SDCs) on public roads in California. In accordance with the DMV rule , this report covers the period from the date of issuance of Google's Manufacturer's Testing Permit (September 24, 2014) through November 30, 2015.

...
Disengagements are a critical part of the testing process that allows our engineers to expand the software's capabilities and identify areas of improvement. Our objective is not to minimize disengagements; rather, it is to gather, while operating safely, as much data as possible to enable us to improve our self-driving system." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...This is very good news that Google released this report. This is all about uncovering the "corner cases" ("the edge of the cage") so that Google and everyone else can stay away from these "corners" or improve the algorithms, sensors and actuators so that the cage becomes larger. This report contains EXTREMELY valuable information! :-)* Alain



[In First Public Comments, Self-Driving Car CEO Urges Automakers to Buy Into Google's Driverless Vision](#)

M. Bergen, Jan 12, "A ton of car industry eyes were watching John Krafcik closely today as he delivered his first public comments as the chief executive of Google's self-driving car division.

But they didn't see any big surprises. Krafcik did not unfurl any deals with carmakers. Instead, he doubled down on Google's unique commitment to total autonomy, a critical signal to the industry — and its regulators — that this approach is the safest route as self-driving vehicles prepare to become a massive business....But most of his talk focused on how self-driving cars will drastically curb deaths on the roads. ..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...OK. Alain*



[U.S. Transportation Secretary: Self-Driving Car Rules Are Coming — Eventually \(Q&A\)](#)

M. Bergen, Jan 7, "...Foxx, who is likely to be heading out with the Obama Administration, also appears intent on setting national self-driving policies before he departs, particularly on vehicle-to-vehicle communication standards. For now, robot car rules are left to the states. The first draft regulation to come out, from California, drew the ire of Google for its prohibition on fully driverless cars. Foxx strongly suggested that his agency may deploy overriding Federal rules, but stopped short of giving specifics. "We're a little ways away," he said..

When will we see fully autonomous cars on the road? "I think we're going to see it within five years. That doesn't mean 100 percent penetration; that just means market availability. But I actually think we're going to see it within five years." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Foxx pushing Autonomous (without reference to DoT's Connected legacy). Wow! :-)* *Alain*



CARS AND THE FUTURE

B. Thompson, Jan 12 "Once again, a company, built around the hottest tech in the industry, stole the spotlight at CES. This time, though, the product was not a smartphone, and the company was not Apple. For my money the most interesting news of last week came from a most surprising source: General Motors.

First up was the news that the century-old American car maker was investing \$500 million in ride-sharing startup Lyft. Then, a few days later, the company formally introduced the Chevrolet Bolt, Perhaps it was the company in question, or simply the timing, but it reinforced the sense that fundamental change is coming to the world of transportation. What is interesting, though, is that while change is certainly coming, it is coming on multiple axes: ... when it comes to questioning the future of transportation, the "What?", "How?", and "Where?" are all in play. ...

Similarly, self-driving cars remove the largest cost from ride-sharing services: the driver. This has import beyond any one ride in question: the big prize is consumers giving up cars completely, which would result in ride-sharing utilization increasing exponentially..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Yup!! Also try: [CAR FOLLOW-UP. THE APPLE CAR. UBER'S FINANCIALS](#) and [Uber's Losses Grow. But So Do Its Profit Projections](#)* *Alain*



Uber's Losses Grow, But So Do Its Profit Projections

A. Efrati, Jan 11, "Uber's losses grew to nearly a billion dollars in the first half of last year, nearly 50% more than its full-year losses in 2014, according to confidential documents issued by the company as part of financing efforts last year. Net revenue in the first half of 2015 was \$663 million, the documents showed. ..." [Read more](#) *Hmmm...Yup!! Set it up for the operating costs to be cut by an order of magnitude with driverless cars.* *Alain*

Some other thoughts that deserve your



[Ford's FordPass app is the beginning of the end of car ownership](#)

N. Jaynes, Jan 11. "Mobility" has become a buzzword in the automotive industry. It's not enough anymore to simply make safe, reliable cars anymore. Brands now have to also boast about their ability to get people mobile products as well...

Granted, this first generation of FordPass seems to be a bit more style than substance. That said, it is most certainly the first glimpse into what the new mobility universe will look and operate like in the coming decades. Let's look at why..." [Read more](#) *Hmmmm...Maybe??? Alain*