



Robert L. Darbelnet
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Mr. Alan Mulally
President and Chief Executive Officer
Ford Motor Company
The American Road
Dearborn, MI - 48126

June 11, 2013

Dear Mr. Mulally,

Driver distraction is widely recognized as a significant safety hazard on our roadways and reducing distraction is a shared interest for AAA and Ford. New research being released this week by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) advances our collective knowledge of one part of the distracted driving challenge: mental, or cognitive, distraction. I write to you today to provide a copy of this new research and to ask your company to join us in the second phase of this project, which will look at the mental distraction associated with a wide range of voice-driven and voice-to-text applications increasingly available to drivers via their in-vehicle systems and the mobile devices (smartphone, tablets, other devices) that they bring with them. We held a preliminary discussion about this research with Ford's Washington staff earlier this month.

The AAA Foundation research builds on over 50 years of cognitive distraction research from the aviation industry. The findings are noteworthy in identifying significantly higher cognitive distraction associated with increasingly common voice-to-text features available to drivers through vehicles and smartphones. A broader detailing of the findings is available in our news release, which is included.

Based on this research, AAA invites the auto and consumer electronics industries to join us in exploring:

- Limiting use of voice-activated technology to core driving-related activities such as climate control, navigation and cruise control, and to ensure these applications do not lead to increased safety risk due to mental distraction while the car is moving.
- Disabling certain functionalities of voice-to-text technologies such as using social media or interacting with e-mail and text messages so that they are inoperable while the vehicle is in motion.
- Educating vehicle owners and mobile device users about the responsible use and safety risks for in-vehicle technologies.

AAA expects this research to substantially inform discussions on driver distraction and help guide consumer education efforts and the development of consumer connectivity technologies in vehicles. As such, we would welcome the opportunity to provide you with more details on Phase II of this research and get Ford's feedback on the protocol development.

For more information on the completed and planned research, your staff is invited to contact Justin McNaull at 202-942-2065 or jmcnaull@national.aaa.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert L. Darbelnet'.

Robert L. Darbelnet

RLD/cs

cc: Curtis Magleby, *VP of Gov't Relations – Ford Motor Company*