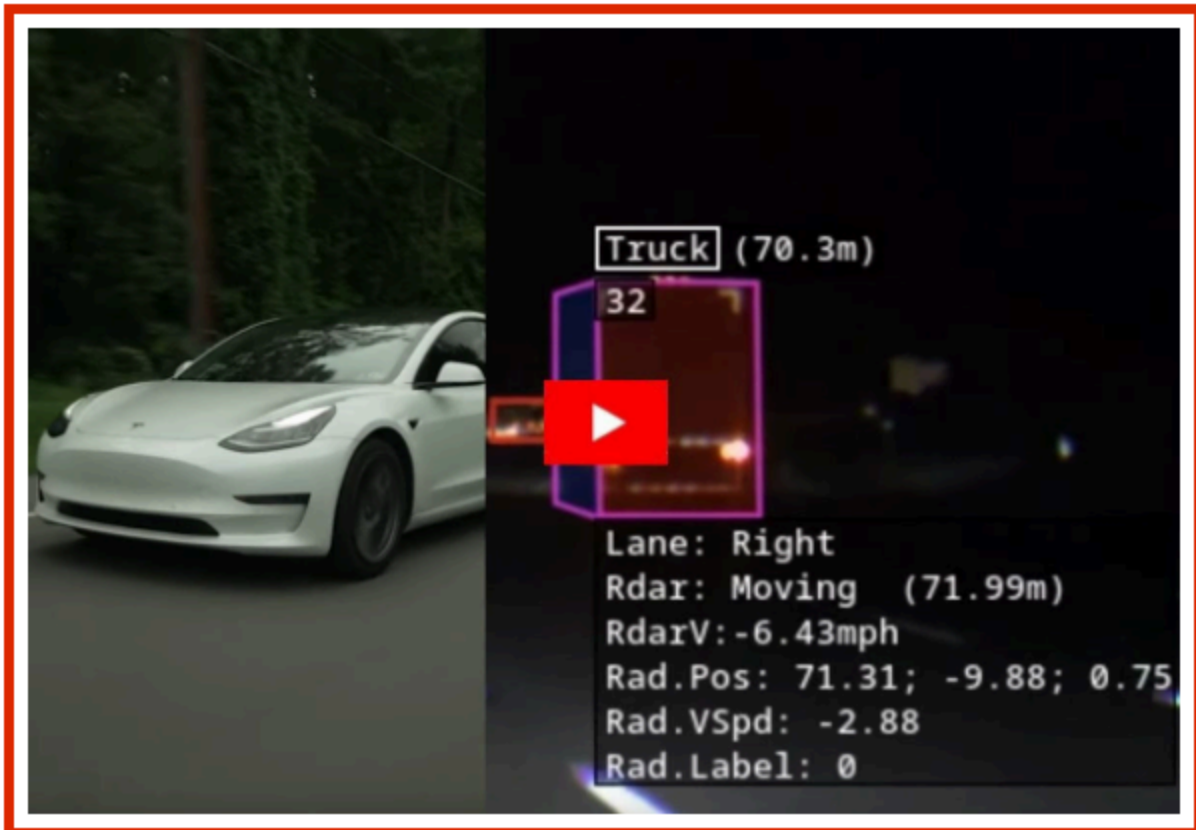




MRF & NCOM Joint Statement

Florida Jury: Tesla Partially Liable

A Florida jury's decision this month to hold Tesla partially liable for a fatal crash involving its Autopilot system has sent shockwaves through the auto industry. It also has motorcyclists' rights groups reminding people of our concerns.

A jury found that Tesla bore partial responsibility for a 2019 crash in Key Largo, FL, that claimed the life of a woman and seriously injured her boyfriend. The driver had engaged Tesla's Autopilot system and trusted that the car would see what the driver could not. It didn't. The vehicle plowed into a parked car at over 60 miles per hour.

"I trusted the technology too much," the driver told the court. "I believed that if the car saw something in front of it, it would provide a warning and apply the brakes."

A jury agreed that it wasn't just the driver at fault but also the automaker, for not designing limits on how the technology could be used and failing to adequately educate their customers.

This is an example of the public's flawed understanding of what self-driving systems can do. As motorcyclists, we understand how important it is to ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings.

However, it is unfortunate that marketing around these vehicles and their systems often promises ease, comfort, and advanced safety. The reality has shown repeatedly that those promises can quickly become deadly illusions.

The Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) and National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM) have long pressed for stronger oversight, increased transparency and public awareness of what this technology can do and more importantly, what it cannot do.

Motorcyclists must be included in the development and testing of automated systems; we are road users too. All too often, we are treated as an afterthought.

Now more than ever, it is time to support groups like the MRF and NCOM, who are on the front lines of this battle.
