

TESLA STATEMENT ON WALTER HUANG'S DEATH

(The following statement from Tesla was received by e-mail and was reformatted. The sender verified the statement.)

“We are very sorry for the family’s loss.

According to the family, Mr. Huang was well aware that Autopilot was not perfect and, specifically, he told them it was not reliable in that exact location, yet he nonetheless engaged Autopilot at that location. The crash happened on a clear day with several hundred feet of visibility ahead, which means that the only way for this accident to have occurred is if Mr. Huang was not paying attention to the road, despite the car providing multiple warnings to do so.

The fundamental premise of both moral and legal liability is a broken promise, and there was none here. Tesla is extremely clear that Autopilot requires the driver to be alert and have hands on the wheel. This reminder is made every single time Autopilot is engaged. If the system detects that hands are not on, it provides visual and auditory alerts. This happened several times on Mr. Huang’s drive that day.

We empathize with Mr. Huang’s family, who are understandably facing loss and grief, but the false impression that Autopilot is unsafe will cause harm to others on the road. NHTSA found that even the early version of Tesla Autopilot resulted in 40% fewer crashes and it has improved substantially since then. The reason that other families are not on TV is because their loved ones are still alive.”