

4 Questions About DOT's \$4B Plan For Driverless Car Tech, *Law360*, ft. Tad A. Devlin

Tad A. Devlin was quoted in a Law360 article written by Linda Chiem on January 15, 2016:

The federal government's plan to invest \$4 billion to help get autonomous cars onto U.S. roads has Silicon Valley and the automotive industry tickled, but attorneys say there are still liability and deployment issues to smooth out before self-driving cars hit the mainstream.

The Obama administration on Thursday carved out nearly \$4 billion in its proposed 2017 budget to get moving on rolling out connected vehicle systems in designated corridors across the U.S., vowing to work with industry leaders to shape rules and regulations for operating connected cars and cars without a live driver behind the wheel.

Tad commented on the insurance liability:

Tad Devlin, a commercial and insurance litigation partner at Kaufman Dolowich & Voluck, says liability in the event of a driverless car crash is uncharted territory and it remains to be seen who bears the burden of liability in the event of a car accident – the automaker, the operating system designer or the owner.

"Risks that could lead a driverless car to crash may include inability to function in rain, snow and fog, or inability to predict obstacles on a route," Devlin said. "Public policy and perception may prohibit immunity to the manufacturer of a driverless car, and they may not seek immunity to avoid consumer discord and commercial impact. However, if you remove the concept of personal responsibility, drivers could be more lax on safety."