Compensation at the Crossroads
Autonomous Vehicles & Alternative Victim Compensation Schemes

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Tesla driver killed while using autopilot was watching Harry Potter, witness says

Driver in first known fatal self-driving car crash was also driving so fast that 'he went so fast through my trailer I didn’t see him', the truck driver involved said.
Uber's fatal self-driving crash reportedly caused by software

The software that's supposed to detect objects in the road was tuned down, which caused it to ignore a pedestrian walking across a dark Arizona road, according to The Information.
1. How autonomous vehicle crash cases are handled is a critical issue for both manufacturers and consumers.

2. The U.S. tort system is currently ill-prepared to handle such cases.

3. A victim compensation fund offers a useful alternative.
Advantages

1. Well-established
2. Well-known/Understood (Kind of)
3. Products Liability Jurisprudence

Disadvantages

1. Expensive & Time-Consuming
2. Unpredictable
3. Lack of AI Precedent
Quasi-Judicial VCFs

- Administered by a court or federal agency
- Funded by excise taxes or fines
- No-fault and non-adversarial
- Awards made pursuant to published tables or formulas
Where is the Incentive to Improve?

Data-Sharing

Design Improvement

NHTSA

WAYMO

GM

Volkswagen

Tesla
How Will We Fund the Fund?

EXCISE TAX → $200-$800/vehicle
Can’t We Just Rely on Private Insurance?