



Senator Jerry Hill, 13th Senate District

SB 145 – facilitating deployment of driverless vehicles – factsheet

IN BRIEF

Helps facilitate the safe and timely deployment of driverless vehicles by streamlining the application timeline.

THE PROBLEM

Current law governing the operation of autonomous vehicles (AV's) contains an unnecessary provision that will delay their deployment. In 2012, the Legislature and Governor enacted SB 1298 (Padilla), authorizing the testing and operation of autonomous vehicles on California roads. Under that law, the DMV created regulations for testing AV's with the presence of a driver in the car and is in the process of finalizing regulations for testing and operation of an AV without the presence of a driver.

Current law requires the DMV to notify the Legislature every time it receives an application for operation of an AV without the presence of a driver. Further, the statute states that an application for operation of an AV without the presence of a driver cannot be approved until 180 days has lapsed since the application was filed. This means that each and every time a manufacturer applies for a permit to operate AV's without the presence of a driver, the DMV must notify the Legislature and it also means that an application cannot be approved by the DMV any sooner than 180 days. Current law also unnecessarily delays the effective date of final AV regulations by 120 days from when they are published.

The provisions were generally meant to keep the Legislature informed about the deployment of driverless vehicles. However, the Legislature has other means of staying informed, be it through oversight hearings or the budget process, and the notification provisions in current law will likely have the effect of delaying full driverless operation at a time when other states are aggressively pursuing the deployment of AV's.

BACKGROUND

California is a leader in self-driving technology, a technology that was largely born here, in the labs of California's universities and technology companies. Our state is one of only a handful of states that has taken steps to specifically authorize self-driving technology in state law to foster its development.

The technology has great potential to bring greater efficiency to our systems of transportation, to save lives, reduce injuries, and increase mobility, especially for those whose opportunities to travel even within their own neighborhoods are limited. It is well documented that the large majority of traffic accidents result from human error. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) assigns blame to the driver in 94% of crashes. By removing the driver from the equation, AV's have the potential to reduce crashes and save lives.

Under the 2012 law, the DMV published regulations in 2014 to test an AV with a driver. Under the regulations any manufacturer wishing to test its cars – with a driver at the controls – simply needs to apply for a permit from the DMV, provide certain information, and pay a \$150 application fee. The application is usually approved within 72 hours. Once approved, manufacturers can test their cars in our state. The DMV is expected to this year put out final regulations for the testing and operation of AV's without the presence of a driver.

The goal of the law and regulations is to balance the testing and deployment of a new transportation technology with reasonable rules that ensures integrity and confidence in its ability to safely transport passengers and cargo.

THE SOLUTION

SB 145 will eliminate the unnecessary requirement that the DMV notify the Legislature every time there is an application for operation of an AV without the presence of a driver. It will also eliminate the requirement that such applications wait 180 days before being approved.

The bill will further streamline AV deployment by decreasing from 120 days to 30 days, a provision of law that prohibits AV regulations from going into effect until after they are adopted. The bill will also require DMV to notify the public when their regulations are published.

SUPPORT

AAA Northern California, Nevada and Utah
Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
Asian Business Associations
Bay Area Council
Bay Area Central American Chamber of Commerce

Black Woman Organized for Political Action
California Asian Chamber of Commerce
California Chamber of Commerce
California Hawaii State Conference of the NAACP
California League of Latin American Citizens
(LULAC)
Computing Technology Industry Association
Fathers Against Drunk Driving
Global Automakers
Hispanic Chambers of Commerce San Francisco
Latin American and Caribbean Chamber of Commerce
Lyft
Nicaraguan Chamber of Commerce Northern
California
Orange County Business Council
Regulatory Affairs (CTIA)
R Street Institute
San Diego County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
Self-Driving Coalition for Safer Streets
Silicon Valley Leadership Group
Society for the Blind
Tehnet
The Silicon Valley Organization
United Domestic Workers/UDW Local 3930 The
Homecare Providers Union
Waymo
Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Patrick Welch – 651-4013 – patrick.welch@sen.ca.gov