



April 2, 2025

The Honorable Rochelle T. Nguyen
Chair, Senate Growth and Infrastructure Committee
c/o Nevada State Senate
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Re: SB 395 (Ohrenschall) – Heavy Duty AV Driver-in requirement - Oppose

Dear Chair Nguyen and members of the Senate Growth and Infrastructure Committee,

The undersigned organizations write to express strong opposition to SB 395 (Ohrenschall), which would prohibit heavy-duty autonomous vehicles (AVs) from operating in the state of Nevada without a “human operator”.

Autonomous trucks offer the potential to make our roads safer, boost supply chain efficiency, and create new, high quality career opportunities for Nevada workers without causing significant job displacements.

Road Safety

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimated that in the first 9 months of 2024, there were 29,135 fatalities involving motor vehicle traffic crashes.¹ The NHTSA also analyzes data involving large trucks over 10,000 pounds. The most recent report found that nationally in 2022 there were 5,936 people killed in traffic crashes involving large trucks, 160,608 people injured in traffic crashes involving large trucks, and a total of 536,424 large trucks were involved in police

¹ <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813670>

reported traffic crashes.² Seventy percent of people killed in these large truck crashes were occupants of other vehicles and seventy-six percent of the fatal crashes occurred on weekdays.³ Of the 5,936 people killed nationally in traffic crashes involving large trucks, 45 of them were in Nevada — 11 were occupants of large trucks and 34 were occupants of other vehicles.⁴

Autonomous trucks have the potential to significantly enhance roadway safety by eliminating some of the most common human factors that contribute to crashes, including driver fatigue, distraction, and impaired judgment. Automated driving systems use an array of sensors, cameras, and real-time data analytics to continuously monitor road conditions, traffic patterns, and vehicle operations, ensuring precise control at all times. Unlike human drivers, these systems do not tire, become distracted, or drive under the influence; they can also respond more quickly to sudden hazards, reducing the likelihood of collisions. In this way, autonomous trucks offer a consistent, vigilant, and reliable driver supply, underscoring the potential for improved safety outcomes alongside the economic and efficiency benefits they can deliver.

Improving the efficiency of the supply chain

Integrating autonomous trucks into our logistics networks can help alleviate ongoing supply chain bottlenecks by expanding available freight capacity and streamlining long-haul transportation. Autonomous trucks can operate continuously with minimal downtime, alleviate driver availability constraints and labor shortages that can hamper cross-country shipments. By reducing delays and improving scheduling efficiency, these vehicles enable businesses to reliably move goods, better manage inventory, and respond to market fluctuations. Ultimately, they can provide a valuable new option for shippers and carriers to bolster transportation reliability and deliver products to consumers in a timely, cost-effective manner. Critically, such efficiency gains can also benefit rural communities, which often face higher shipping costs and fewer delivery options. More frequent and dependable freight services mean that rural areas receive crucial goods—like groceries, medicine, and farming supplies—more consistently, thereby helping to stimulate local economies and improve the overall quality of life for residents.

Autonomous heavy-duty trucks and jobs

Autonomous trucking technology is leveraging the existing workforce to create new roles for different education and skill levels, including jobs such as service technicians, remote assistance operators, mapping data collectors, delivery packers, and more. In parallel, this emerging technology can help address the current shortage of qualified drivers rather than displacing them, by reducing the burden of long-haul driving and empowering drivers to transition into these advanced, higher-skilled positions. USDOT conducted a study analyzing the macroeconomic impacts of automated driving systems in long-haul trucking and

² <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813588>

³ <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813588>

⁴ <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813588>

found that U.S. employment would increase by 26,400 to 35,100 jobs per year on average.⁵ Additionally, as more advanced vehicles join the fleet, drivers are freed up for local routes or shorter hauls that can provide a better work-life balance. By mitigating driver shortages and offering cutting-edge career opportunities, the industry stands to benefit as a whole.

In light of these benefits—ranging from enhanced safety and expanded logistics capacity to new high-quality jobs—it is clear that banning heavy-duty autonomous trucks would forgo critical opportunities for innovation, economic growth, and improved public well-being. Embracing these vehicles and overseeing them under Nevada’s longstanding and proven regulatory AV framework is a far more constructive path, helping to maintain Nevada’s leadership in autonomous technology rather than placing the state behind others. By carefully balancing existing safety measures with pro-innovation policies, we can ensure that autonomous trucking meets the state’s evolving transportation needs while enshrining Nevada as a trailblazer in the mobility revolution. For these reasons, we strongly oppose SB 395.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JT', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jose Torres, MPA
Deputy Executive Director for California and the Southwest
TechNet

On Behalf of,
Aurora
Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association
Gatik
Kodiak
Stack
Tesla
Waabi

⁵ “Macroeconomic Impacts of Automated Driving Systems in Long-Haul Trucking.” USDOT, 28 Jan. 2021, rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/54596.