



April 2, 2025

The Nevada Trucking Association is opposed to Senate Bill 395.

Drivers: Our Greatest Strength

With trucks transporting 95.3% of all manufactured freight across Nevada, from everyday essentials like food and fuel to supporting businesses and families statewide, trucking is the blood of our supply chain.

As we navigate the future, the emergence of automated technology has raised questions about the role of our greatest asset—our drivers. Some worry that these advancements signal the end of truck driving jobs, but the Nevada Trucking Association sees a more complex and optimistic reality.

Automated technology doesn't mean every truck will become a "driverless vehicle" or that jobs will vanish. Instead, it's a tool to enhance the industry, improving efficiency in freight movement and addressing driver shortages, while preserving the critical role of human drivers.

The need for drivers endures because of the diverse challenges inherent in trucking—hauling liquids, livestock, hazardous materials, large construction equipment, and oversized loads across varied road, terrain, and weather conditions. These complexities ensure that drivers remain an indispensable part of a logistics system that includes automated trucks. While driver responsibilities may evolve with technology, the industry will continue to rely on skilled professionals to keep our roads safe and our economy thriving.

Our truck drivers are the heart of this industry, bringing irreplaceable skill and resilience to our supply chain. Autonomous technology holds immense promise for enhancing safety and efficiency as a complement to the critical role of our drivers.

Autonomous Technology Can Save Lives

Autonomous trucks and cars represent a revolutionary advancement in highway safety by tackling the primary cause of most crashes: human error. This safety technology, equipped with cutting-edge sensors, artificial intelligence, and real-time data processing, eliminate the vulnerabilities inherent in human drivers—such as speeding, misjudgment, fatigue, and distraction. By mitigating these risks, autonomous vehicles (AVs) have the potential to save tens of thousands of lives across the United States and in states like Nevada. While challenges persist, the prospect of saving tens of thousands of lives positions autonomous vehicles as a pivotal element of a safer, more intelligent transportation future.

Human error is the predominant factor in traffic accidents nationwide. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 94% of all traffic crashes result from human mistakes, encompassing a range of issues including distraction, speeding, impaired driving, and poor decision-making. In 2022, there were 42,795 recorded traffic fatalities in the U.S., which is akin to the number of people who die annually from breast cancer. Based on those numbers, reducing traffic deaths by 94% mean that 40,227 lives would not be lost due to preventable human errors.

Extrapolating those numbers to the Silver State, approximately 359 lives could be saved in Nevada. This projection emphasizes the life-saving promise of AVs, particularly in a state that has been at the forefront of autonomous vehicle testing and deployment.



Nevada's leadership—demonstrated by the introduction of the Freightliner Inspiration Truck, the first licensed autonomous truck in the U.S.—positions it to reap these safety benefits early. As AV technology advances, Nevada's highways could set a precedent for reducing human-caused crashes.

Nevada's Innovation at Risk

SB 395 endangers Nevada's trailblazing edge. Our state led the way when the first autonomous truck (the Freightliner Inspiration Truck) rolled onto U.S. public roads here, demonstrating how technology boosts safety and efficiency. A unified federal framework is essential to preserve Nevada's leadership in innovation, not a disjointed mess that holds it back.

Interstate Commerce Challenges

Trucking powers interstate commerce, moving goods across borders to drive the economy. But a patchwork of state rules—vehicle size limits, emissions standards, safety mandates—complicates this work. These variations raise costs, slow operations, and even heighten safety risks as drivers adjust mid-route. Even California, a state often at the forefront of difficult regulatory policy, recognized these challenges when Governor Newsom vetoed a similar bill, citing it was unnecessary with the current regulatory framework and that it could weaken economic growth and innovation.

Federal Rules Suffice

Federal regulations like 49 CFR 392.22 already ensure safety and the need for a driver with practical requirements, such as roadside triangles being placed around stopped trucks to warn approaching traffic.

Cargo Theft Keeps Drivers Essential

Cargo theft costs the industry \$35 billion annually, surging when trucks idle over long weekends. Drivers stay in the cab to deter thieves, respond to risks, and handle threats technology alone can't stop.

SB 395 jeopardizes Nevada's pioneering role in innovation and burdens interstate commerce with inconsistent state regulations, undermining the economic vitality trucking sustains. Drivers remain essential in addressing the daily operation challenges in trucking, which technology alone cannot solve. We champion a unified federal approach that ensures safety and supports innovation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Paul J. Enos".

Paul J. Enos, CEO Nevada Trucking Association