
THIRD READING

Bill No: SB 59
Author: Allen (D)
Amended: 5/17/19
Vote: 21

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: 10-1, 4/9/19
AYES: Beall, Bates, Dodd, Galgiani, McGuire, Roth, Rubio, Skinner, Umberg,
Wieckowski
NOES: Morrell
NO VOTE RECORDED: Stone

SENATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE: 7-0, 4/24/19
AYES: Allen, Bates, Hill, Skinner, Stern, Stone, Wieckowski

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-0, 5/16/19
AYES: Portantino, Bradford, Hill, Jones, Wieckowski
NO VOTE RECORDED: Bates

SUBJECT: Autonomous vehicle technology: Statewide policy

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to convene an autonomous vehicle (AV) interagency working group to guide policy development for autonomous passenger vehicles pursuant to specific principles, and report to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2022.

ANALYSIS: Existing law authorizes the operation of AVs on public roads for testing and non-testing purposes under certain circumstances subject to regulations adopted by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), as specified.

This bill:

- 1) Requires the OPR to convene an AV interagency working group (working group) to guide policy development for autonomous passenger vehicles. The working group shall include the State Transportation Agency, Caltrans, DMV, the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, the Strategic Growth Council, the State Air Resources Board (ARB), and representatives of local governments as determined by OPR.
- 2) Requires OPR to recommend to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2022, on how to further deployment of autonomous passenger vehicles consistent with the following principles:
 - a) Reduce motor vehicle crashes and improve road safety for all users
 - b) Maximize ride-sharing and shared use of AVs
 - c) Shift toward zero emission AVs
 - d) Reduce vehicle emissions
 - e) Integrate AVs as part of a multimodal transportation system
 - f) Support compact infill development
 - g) Increase affordable mobility options, particularly for disadvantaged communities, and increase accessibility for individuals with physical and cognitive impairments
 - h) Promote the needs of rural residents and communities

Background

In 2012, SB 1298 (Padilla, Chapter 570, Statutes of 2012) established conditions for the operation of AVs in California. In 2014, the DMV adopted regulations for the testing of AVs on public roads requiring a test driver and established an application and approval process for a testing permit. As of April 1, 2018, there are 52 manufacturers that have this permit. In early 2018, the DMV adopted regulations for testing AVs without a driver at the wheel and for deployment of AVs in California. DMV began accepting applications for these permits on April 1, 2018.

Comments

- 1) *Author's statement.* SB 59 will ensure California plans responsibly for the potential wide-scale introduction of AVs to prevent this innovative new technology from adding to our serious climate, clean air, and traffic challenges. AVs can significantly improve how Californians get around including by increasing safety. However, if not planned for deliberately, this new transportation mode could exacerbate our already daunting mobility problems leading to more traffic congestion and air pollution.
- 2) *Uncertainty and policy coordination.* AVs have the potential to transform every sector of transportation. However, much is uncertain about these impacts. AVs could enhance vehicle safety by removing human error from the driving task and improving access to mobility for many people. On the other hand, AVs could create more congestion and sprawl, as it becomes more convenient to use the “free” time of riding in AVs for other tasks such as work. AVs could replace transit trips, or it could provide better first- and last-mile connectivity to increase transit use. Furthermore, unabashed support for AVs has been tempered by highly publicized accidents and misuse of AV technology, as well as concern for the impact on our workforce.

According to the UC Davis Institute of Transportation Studies, if there is just automation without shared mobility or electrification (e.g., people primarily riding in personal, gas-powered AVs), then California could end up in a future of more vehicle miles traveled, more vehicles on the road, more sprawl, and more greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. This bill establishes policy support for the Legislature toward coordinating deployment of AV technology to improve how all Californians get around and meet the state's climate goals.

- 3) *Amendments in the Senate Appropriations Committee.* Amendments in the Senate Appropriations Committee move the date by which the working group shall submit recommendations to the Legislature from January 1, 2021, to January 1, 2022; change ARB's role from co-convenor of the working group with OPR to participant in the working group; and add road safety to the list of principles guiding the working group's work.

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 336 (Dodd, 2019) requires an on-board employee when public transit agencies deploy autonomous transit vehicles. The bill is pending referral in the Assembly.

SB 936 (Allen, 2018) would have required OPR to convene an Autonomous Vehicles Smart Planning Task Force. The bill failed passage in the Senate.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- Estimated one-time OPR costs of up to \$100,000 for staff and administrative support to convene meetings of the working group, conduct research, and draft policy recommendations that further specified principles. (General Fund)

SUPPORT: (Verified 5/16/19)

California Electric Transportation Coalition
CALSTART
Center for Climate Change & Health
Community Environmental Council
Fossil Free California
Sierra Club California
TransForm
Union of Concerned Scientists

OPPOSITION: (Verified 5/16/19)

TechNet

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