

Date of Hearing: August 14, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

SB 59 (Allen) – As Amended July 3, 2019

Policy Committee:	Transportation	Vote:	13 - 0
	Communications and Conveyance		10 - 1

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill directs the chair of the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to establish an advisory committee—the California Council on the Future of Transportation—to provide the Governor and Legislature with recommendations for changes in state policy to ensure California’s leadership in autonomous, driverless and connected vehicle technology.

The bill prescribes a council membership of at least 22 individuals who serve without compensation and who represent or work on behalf of organized transportation workers; the insurance industry; local government; a California public research institution; vehicle manufacturers; technology companies; disability rights advocacy; a local transit agency; a statewide motorist service membership organization; bicycle or pedestrian safety; environmental justice; and public health, science or the environment; as well ten specified members of the Governor’s administration. The bill also directs to the council to form subcommittees each to focus on certain topics and to gather related public comment, including one subcommittee, led by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), to focus on furthering the state’s environmental, public health and energy objectives.

FISCAL EFFECT:

It is reasonable to assume annual costs to support the work of the council will range in the low to mid hundreds of thousands of dollars (special fund). Actual costs will be driven by council activities though, at a minimum, costs will include the full time of at least one CTC staff member who will support the work of the council, at an annual cost of approximately \$175,000 (special fund). In addition, the Governor’s OPR will incur costs, likely in the tens of thousands of dollars annually (GF), to lead and support the subcommittee on furthering the state’s environmental, public health and energy objectives.

There likely will also be administrative costs in addition to the costs cited above. As an illustration of such potential administrative costs, CTC provided per-meeting cost estimates, shown below, which CTC based on reasonable assumptions.

Council administrative meeting costs		\$4,108
Lodging and Travel Costs (per meeting attendee)		
Hotel (one-night)	150	
Air Travel	300	
Ground Transportation	20	
Per Diem	88	
Total:	\$558.00	
Meeting Costs		
Venue	1,000	
Equipment	2,000	
Meeting Materials	500	
Shipping	50	
Total	\$3,550	

Assuming the costs shown above, it would cost \$65,536 for the council's 22 members, plus one support staff, to meet four times annually. Similarly, it would cost another \$67,768 for the council subcommittees to meet four times annually, assuming there are four subcommittees each consisting of five members and one support staff. Presumably, CTC and, as appropriate, OPR, would incur these additional costs.

COMMENTS:

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

California should support the continued research and development of autonomous vehicle technology as it has the potential to eventually contribute, along with other transportation developments, to safety and mobility and to other environmental, economic, public health, and social equity benefits. Autonomous vehicle technology continues to be developed and its full potential has yet to be realized.

2) **Background.** Pursuant to statute, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has issued regulations allowing the operation of autonomous vehicles on California roadways. DMV has issued permits to many companies to allow testing of autonomous vehicles, with and without drivers in the vehicle. However, DMV has yet to issue a permit to allow deployment

of autonomous vehicles. Nonetheless, many predict autonomous vehicles will be a regular component of California's future, the more hopeful among them noting the potential for such vehicles to improve safety, provide environmental, economic, public health and social equity benefits.

In 2018, the Governor's Interagency Working Group on Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) published the ZEV Action Plan, which called for OPR and the Air Resources Board to lead an autonomous vehicle interagency group to determine policies necessary to ensure the rise of autonomous transportation benefits for all Californians, both environmentally and economically. In 2018, OPR convened a multi-agency task force and published a set of principles it believes should be followed to ensure autonomous vehicles align with the state's interests.

Earlier versions of this bill directed OPR to continue its work, largely in line with the call made in the ZEV Action Plan. The Assembly Committee on Transportation's analysis of the bill expressed concern with that direction, contending OPR's process lacked legislative input, was unrepresentative of the views of many important stakeholders and that OPR lacked experience leading legislatively created task forces and developing transportation policy. To address these concerns, the committee amended the bill to task CTC with leading the council and prescribed membership of the council, topics the council shall consider and general processes the council is to follow.

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