

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2970

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Transportation, February 26, 2018

Title: An act relating to the establishment of an autonomous vehicle work group.

Brief Description: Establishing an autonomous vehicle work group.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Hudgins, Morris, Kloba and Muri).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/14/18, 96-2.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/19/18, 2/26/18 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Amended Bill

- Requires the Transportation Commission to convene an executive and legislative work group to develop policy recommendations regarding the operation of autonomous vehicles.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; Chase, Cleveland, Dhingra, Fortunato, Lias, McCoy, Sheldon, Takko, Walsh, Wellman and Zeiger.

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: In recent years, the federal government has issued voluntary guidance and a model policy relating to automated driving systems, also known as autonomous vehicles (AVs), which are vehicles in which some or all driving functions are performed by the vehicle and not a person. The guidance suggests, among other things, that state legislatures review traffic laws and regulations that may serve as barriers to the operation of AVs. The guidance also suggests that states consider: oversight roles; an application and permission process for entities to test AVs on public roadways; specific considerations for AV test drivers and operations; registration and titling concerns; working with public safety officials; and liability and insurance.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Additionally, in June 2017, the Governor issued Executive Order 17-02, which required the Office of the Governor to convene and facilitate an AV work group, and authorized pilot programs for the testing of AVs. The AV work group includes the following executive branch agencies: the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Department of Commerce, the Department of Licensing (DOL), the Washington State Patrol (WSP), the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC), and the Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance. The AV work group may request periodic briefings and updates on the pilot programs, as well as propose changes or clarifications to state policies, rules, and statutes to facilitate the expanded safe operation of AVs. There are currently no legislators appointed to the AV work group.

Summary of Amended Bill: The state Transportation Commission must convene an executive and legislative work group to develop policy recommendations to address the operation of AVs on public roadways in the state. The AV work group expires December 31, 2023.

Executive Branch Membership. The AV work group must include:

- the Governor, or designee(s);
- the insurance commissioner, or designee(s);
- the director of DOL, or designee(s);
- the secretary of WSDOT, or designee(s);
- the chief of WSP, or designee(s); and
- the director of the WTSC, or designee(s).

Executive branch membership may also include:

- the assistant secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services Aging and Long-Term Support Administration, or designee(s); and
- the deputy director of the Department of Enterprise Services who oversees fleet administration, or designee(s).

Legislative Branch Membership. The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives must each appoint two interested members from each of their respective chamber's two largest caucuses, for a total of eight legislators.

Other Membership. The Transportation Commission may invite other relevant public and private sector stakeholders as appropriate.

AV Work Group Duties. The AV work group must prepare for the the use of AV technology in the state by:

- following developments in AV technology and deployment, and in federal, state, and local policies relating to the operation of AVs;
- exploring approaches to the modification of state policy, rules, and laws to further public safety and prepare the state for the emergence and development of AV technology;
- disseminate information to interested stakeholders; and
- engage the public, subject to legislative direction, in order to inform policymakers for the purposes of policy development.

Transportation Commission Duties. In addition to convening the AV work group, the Transportation Commission must develop and update recommendations annually based on the AV work group's input. The Transportation Commission must report to the Governor and the Legislature by November 15 of each year, describing the progress made by the AV work group and the Commission's recommendations.

EFFECT OF TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE AMENDMENT(S):

- Removes the specific committee-based legislative membership, and directs the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House to appoint two interested members from each of the four caucuses.
- Makes two technical changes: (1) Codifies section 1 into chapter 47.01 RCW and (2) refines the "subject to appropriations" language.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: Yes.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute House Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The technology industry supports AVs and this bill. It will help target zero goals to reduce vehicle accidents and casualties. The vision of AVs is aligned with insurance goals. The Transportation Commission is used to convening these types of policy groups. This bill is consistent with federal guidelines regarding AVs. AAA of Washington believes AV technology helps with mobility and safety on public highways. The bill helps policymakers hear from the public and stakeholders concerning AVs. The business community supports this bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jo Deutsch, TechNet; Steve Marshall, City of Bellevue Transportation Technology Partnership Management; Gary Strannigan, Safeco, Liberty Mutual Insurance; Reema Griffith, Washington State Transportation Commission; Mike Ennis, Association of Washington Business; Janet Ray, AAA Washington; Chris Johnson, East King County Chambers of Commerce Legislative Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.