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**SENATE BILL 6243**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senator Boehnke

1 AN ACT Relating to the operation of autonomous motor vehicles;  
2 amending RCW 46.30.050; adding new sections to chapter 46.92 RCW;  
3 repealing RCW 46.92.010; and providing an effective date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 The definitions in this section apply throughout this section and  
8 sections 2 through 12 of this act unless the context clearly requires  
9 otherwise.

10 (1) "Automated driving system" means the hardware and software  
11 that are collectively capable of performing the entire dynamic  
12 driving task on a sustained basis, regardless of whether it is  
13 limited to a specific operational design domain.

14 (2) "Autonomous motor vehicle" means a motor vehicle equipped  
15 with an automated driving system designed to function as a level  
16 three system when the automated driving system is engaged, four  
17 system, or five system under the society of automotive engineers  
18 international standard J3016, as it existed on the effective date of  
19 this section.

20 (3) "Dynamic driving task" means all of the real-time operational  
21 and tactical functions required to operate a vehicle in on-road

1 traffic, excluding the strategic functions such as trip scheduling  
2 and selection of destinations and waypoints, and including:

- 3 (a) Lateral vehicle motion control via steering;
- 4 (b) Longitudinal motion control via acceleration and  
5 deceleration;
- 6 (c) Monitoring the driving environment via object and event  
7 detection, recognition, classification, and response preparation;
- 8 (d) Object and event response execution;
- 9 (e) Maneuver planning; and
- 10 (f) Enhancing conspicuity via lighting, signaling, and gesturing.

11 (4) "Dynamic driving task fallback" means the response by the  
12 person or human driver to either perform the dynamic driving task or  
13 achieve a minimal risk condition after the occurrence of any dynamic  
14 driving task performance-relevant system failure or upon operational  
15 design domain exit, or the response by an automated driving system to  
16 achieve minimal risk condition, given the same circumstances.

17 (5) "Human driver" means a natural person in the vehicle with a  
18 valid driver's license to operate a motor vehicle who controls all or  
19 part of the dynamic driving task.

20 (6) "Minimal risk condition" means a stable, stopped condition to  
21 which a person, human driver, or an automated driving system may  
22 bring a vehicle after performing the dynamic driving task fallback in  
23 order to reduce the risk of a crash when a given trip cannot or  
24 should not be completed.

25 (7) "On-demand autonomous vehicle network" means a transportation  
26 service network that uses a software application or other digital  
27 means to dispatch or otherwise enable the prearrangement of  
28 transportation with autonomous motor vehicles for purposes of  
29 transporting passengers or goods, including for-hire transportation  
30 and transportation of passengers or goods for compensation.

31 (8) "Operational design domain" means operating conditions under  
32 which a given automated driving system is specifically designed to  
33 function including, but not limited to, environmental, geographical,  
34 and time-of-day restrictions, or the requisite presence or absence of  
35 certain traffic or roadway characteristics.

36 (9) "Person" means a natural person, corporation, business trust,  
37 estate, trust, partnership, limited liability company, association,  
38 joint venture, governmental agency, public corporation, or any other  
39 legal or commercial entity.

1 (10) "Request to intervene" means an alert or notification by an  
2 automated driving system to a human driver, that the human driver  
3 should promptly begin or resume performance of part or all of the  
4 dynamic driving task.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) A person may operate an autonomous motor vehicle on the  
8 public roadways of this state when the automated driving system is  
9 engaged only if such vehicle meets the following conditions:

10 (a) If a failure of the automated driving system occurs that  
11 renders that system unable to perform the entire dynamic driving task  
12 relevant to its intended operational design domain, the autonomous  
13 motor vehicle achieves a minimal risk condition or, if the failure  
14 occurs in a vehicle with an automated driving system that is a level  
15 three system under the society of automotive engineers international  
16 standard J3016, as it existed on the effective date of this section,  
17 the automated driving system must issue a request to intervene;

18 (b) The autonomous motor vehicle is capable of operating in  
19 compliance with the applicable traffic and motor vehicle safety laws  
20 and rules under this title when reasonable to do so, unless an  
21 exemption has been granted by the department;

22 (c) When required by federal law, the autonomous motor vehicle  
23 displays the required manufacturer's certification label indicating  
24 that at the time of its manufacture it has been certified to be in  
25 compliance with all applicable federal motor vehicle safety  
26 standards, including reference to any exemption granted by the  
27 national highway traffic safety administration; and

28 (d) The autonomous motor vehicle is covered by liability  
29 insurance under section 4 of this act.

30 (2)(a) In addition to satisfying the requirements of subsection  
31 (1) of this section, a person may operate an autonomous motor vehicle  
32 on the public roadways of this state when the automated driving  
33 system is engaged if:

34 (i) The person receives and maintains an authorization to operate  
35 the autonomous motor vehicle from the department under (b) of this  
36 subsection; and

37 (ii) The department has been provided with a first responder  
38 action plan. For purposes of this subsection, a "first responder  
39 action plan" is a document specifying how first responders should

1 interact with an autonomous motor vehicle that, at a minimum,  
2 describes:

3 (A) How to communicate with a fleet support specialist who is  
4 available during the times the autonomous motor vehicle is in  
5 operation;

6 (B) How to safely remove the autonomous motor vehicle from the  
7 roadway and steps to safely tow the vehicle;

8 (C) How to recognize whether the autonomous motor vehicle is in  
9 autonomous mode; and

10 (D) Any additional information the person submitting the plan,  
11 the manufacturer of the autonomous motor vehicle, or the manufacturer  
12 of the automated driving system deems necessary regarding hazardous  
13 conditions or public safety risks associated with the operation of  
14 the autonomous motor vehicle.

15 (b) To receive an authorization to operate an autonomous motor  
16 vehicle under (a) of this subsection, a person must provide the  
17 following to the department:

18 (i) The name, address, and principal point of contact for the  
19 person applying for the authorization;

20 (ii) Vehicle information for each autonomous motor vehicle used  
21 for operations in the state, such as tag number and state of  
22 issuance, vehicle information number, vehicle make, model, and year,  
23 and proof of current vehicle registration; and

24 (iii) A written statement by the person applying for the  
25 authorization or by the manufacturer of the vehicle or automated  
26 driving system certifying that each autonomous motor vehicle complies  
27 with subsection (1) of this section.

28 (c) Upon receipt of an application under (b) of this subsection  
29 and verifying that the application is complete and accurate, the  
30 department must approve the application and issue an authorization.

31 (3) An authorization issued by the department under this section  
32 does not expire and remains active unless suspended, revoked, or  
33 canceled by the department as described under section 12 of this act.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
35 RCW to read as follows:

36 When an automated driving system installed on an autonomous motor  
37 vehicle is engaged:

38 (1) The automated driving system is considered the driver or  
39 operator, for the purpose of assessing compliance with applicable

1 traffic or motor vehicle laws under this title, and is deemed to  
2 satisfy electronically all physical acts required by a driver or  
3 operator of the vehicle;

4 (2) The automated driving system is considered to be licensed to  
5 drive under chapter 46.20 RCW to operate the vehicle; and

6 (3) The automated driving system operator or human driver may be  
7 issued a traffic infraction or other applicable penalty if the  
8 vehicle fails to comply with applicable traffic or motor vehicle laws  
9 under this title.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 Before operating an autonomous motor vehicle on public roadways  
13 in this state without a human driver, a person must submit proof of  
14 financial responsibility satisfactory to the department that the  
15 autonomous motor vehicle is covered by liability insurance that  
16 satisfies the requirements of RCW 46.30.050.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1) In the event of an accident or collision involving an  
20 autonomous motor vehicle:

21 (a) The autonomous motor vehicle must remain on the scene of the  
22 accident or collision when required under RCW 46.52.020, consistent  
23 with its capability under section 2 of this act.

24 (b) The autonomous motor vehicle's authorization holder, or a  
25 person on behalf of the authorization holder, must report the  
26 accident or collision consistent with RCW 46.52.030(1). Submission of  
27 a report under subsection (2) of this section is authorized in lieu  
28 of the requirement under this subsection (1)(b).

29 (2) Copies of any national highway traffic safety administration  
30 standing general order collision reports for any reportable collision  
31 that occurs in Washington state must be provided to the department  
32 within one day of the provision to the national highway traffic  
33 safety administration, unless such reports are otherwise made  
34 available to the state pursuant to federal law.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
36 RCW to read as follows:

1 (1) It is the intent of the legislature to provide uniformity of  
2 laws governing on-demand autonomous motor vehicle networks throughout  
3 the state, and that an on-demand autonomous motor vehicle network be  
4 considered a stand-alone service as solely regulated under this  
5 section.

6 (2) An on-demand autonomous vehicle network may transport  
7 passengers or goods, including the for-hire transportation of  
8 passengers, including minors, or goods in the state pursuant to this  
9 section.

10 (3) (a) An on-demand autonomous vehicle network must disclose to  
11 the passenger the fare or fare calculator method on its website or  
12 within the online-enabled technology application service before the  
13 beginning of any prearranged ride.

14 (b) Within a reasonable period after the completion of a ride, an  
15 on-demand autonomous vehicle network must transmit an electronic  
16 receipt to the passenger that lists:

- 17 (i) The origin and destination of the ride;
- 18 (ii) The total time and distance of the ride; and
- 19 (iii) The total fare paid.

20 (4) (a) An on-demand autonomous vehicle network is governed  
21 exclusively by state law, and by any local jurisdiction that enacted  
22 ordinances or created rules governing autonomous motor vehicles prior  
23 to the effective date of this section. A county, municipality,  
24 special purpose district, airport authority, or other local  
25 governmental entity or subdivision may not require a license or  
26 permit for, impose reporting requirements on, or otherwise impose  
27 operational restrictions on an on-demand autonomous vehicle network  
28 company within the entity's jurisdiction.

29 (b) A county, municipality, special district, airport authority,  
30 or other local governmental entity or subdivision may only impose a  
31 tax on or subject an on-demand autonomous vehicle network company to  
32 a rate or fee within the entity's jurisdiction if the tax, rate, or  
33 fee is equivalent to those charged to transportation network  
34 companies in the entity's jurisdiction.

35 (c) This subsection does not prohibit an airport or port  
36 authority from:

- 37 (i) Charging reasonable fees consistent with any fees charged to  
38 companies that provide similar services within the airport or port  
39 authority for its use of the airport or port authority's facilities;
- 40 or

1 (ii) Designating locations for staging, pickup, or other similar  
2 operations at the airport or port authority facility; however, such  
3 designated locations must be reasonably equivalent to those required  
4 of other passenger transportation services.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 An autonomous motor vehicle must be properly registered in  
8 accordance with chapter 46.16A RCW, and identified on the certificate  
9 of title and registration as an autonomous motor vehicle.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 (1) A person may operate an autonomous motor vehicle equipped  
13 with an automated driving system capable of performing the entire  
14 dynamic driving task if the automated driving system is capable of  
15 being operated in compliance with this title when reasonable to do so  
16 unless an exemption has been granted by the department.

17 (2) This section does not prohibit or restrict a human driver  
18 from operating an autonomous motor vehicle equipped with controls  
19 that allow for the human driver to control all or part of the dynamic  
20 driving task.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
22 RCW to read as follows:

23 An autonomous motor vehicle that is also a commercial motor  
24 vehicle as defined in RCW 46.16A.010 may operate on the public  
25 roadways of this state, except that any provision under this title  
26 that reasonably applies only to a human driver does not apply to such  
27 a vehicle operating with the automated driving system engaged.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
29 RCW to read as follows:

30 An autonomous motor vehicle that is designed to be operated  
31 exclusively by the automated driving system for all trips is not  
32 subject to motor vehicle equipment laws or rules pursuant to chapter  
33 46.37 RCW that: (1) Relate to or support motor vehicle operation by a  
34 human driver seated in the vehicle; and (2) are not relevant for an  
35 automated driving system.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 11.**    A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, autonomous motor  
4    vehicles and automated driving systems are governed exclusively under  
5    this chapter. The department is the sole and exclusive state agency  
6    that may implement the provisions of this chapter.

7        (2) No state agency, political subdivision, municipality, or  
8    local entity may prohibit the operation of autonomous motor vehicles,  
9    automated driving systems, or on-demand autonomous vehicle networks,  
10   or otherwise enact or keep in force rules or ordinances that would  
11   impose taxes, fees, or other requirements, including performance  
12   standards, specific to the operation of autonomous motor vehicles,  
13   automated driving systems, or on-demand autonomous vehicle networks  
14   in addition to the requirements of this chapter.

15       (3) This section does not limit or preempt the existing authority  
16   of a municipality or other local government to regulate, license, or  
17   tax transportation network companies, ride-hail services, or other  
18   for-hire passenger services utilizing nonautonomous motor vehicles,  
19   or to manage the use of public rights-of-way, consistent with state  
20   law.

21       (4) This chapter does not exempt the in-state purchase of  
22   autonomous motor vehicles from the requirements of chapter 46.96 RCW,  
23   where such requirements apply to all motor vehicles.

24       NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 12.**    A new section is added to chapter 46.92  
25    RCW to read as follows:

26       (1)(a) If the department determines that an autonomous motor  
27   vehicle operating under an authorization issued under section 2(2) of  
28   this act is not in safe operational condition and the operation of  
29   the vehicle on public roadways of the state endangers the public, the  
30   department must provide to the authorization holder a notice of  
31   intent to:

32        (i) Suspend, revoke, or cancel the authorization; or

33        (ii) Impose restrictions on the operation of the vehicle.

34       (b) For purposes of (a) of this subsection, the operation of an  
35   autonomous motor vehicle endangers the public when the operation  
36   creates a substantial risk of death or has caused death, serious  
37   permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the  
38   function of any bodily member or organ.

1 (2) A notice of intent under subsection (1)(a) of this section  
2 must:

3 (a) Include a summary of the department's determination and any  
4 evidence supporting the determination; and

5 (b) Provide the authorization holder a reasonable period in which  
6 to:

7 (i) Correct the issues identified in the department's  
8 determination;

9 (ii) Provide to the department the certification described under  
10 subsection (3)(a) of this section; and

11 (iii) Specify which enforcement actions described in subsection  
12 (1)(a) of this section the department will take if the authorization  
13 holder fails to provide the required certification within the  
14 specified period.

15 (3)(a) Before the expiration of the period specified in a notice  
16 of intent under subsection (2)(b) of this section, the authorization  
17 holder must:

18 (i) Ensure the issues identified by the department in the notice  
19 are corrected; and

20 (ii) Provide to the department a certification acknowledging that  
21 the issues identified by the department in the notice have been  
22 corrected and explaining how the issues have been corrected, such as  
23 identifying operational measures implemented.

24 (b) The department may extend the period specified in a notice of  
25 intent under subsection (2)(b) of this section if the authorization  
26 holder requests an extension in writing and the department determines  
27 the extension is reasonable.

28 (4)(a) If the authorization holder fails to comply with  
29 subsection (3)(a) of this section, the department must issue a  
30 decision that:

31 (i) Suspends, revokes, or cancels the authorization or imposes  
32 restrictions on the operation of the vehicle; and

33 (ii) Promptly notify the authorization holder of the decision.

34 (b) Within 10 days of receiving a notice of a decision issued  
35 under (a) of this subsection, an authorization holder may submit a  
36 written request to the department for review of the decision. Within  
37 10 days of the department receiving such a request for review, the  
38 department must review the decision and issue a final determination  
39 to the authorization holder either upholding or rescinding the  
40 decision.

1 (c) If the department upholds the decision under (b) of this  
2 subsection, an authorization holder may submit a written request for  
3 a hearing. Such a request must be submitted within 10 days of the  
4 department issuing a final determination. The department must set a  
5 hearing date within 10 days of the hearing request and provide the  
6 authorization holder, the manufacturer of the autonomous motor  
7 vehicle, and the manufacturer of the automated driving system the  
8 opportunity to present evidence at the hearing. The hearing must be  
9 conducted by an administrative law judge within the office of  
10 administrative hearings and be conducted within 30 days of the  
11 department issuing a final determination. If a hearing is not held  
12 within such time period, the authorization issued under section 2(2)  
13 of this act must be automatically reinstated or the restriction  
14 imposed automatically removed, as applicable.

15 (5) The department must promptly rescind an authorization  
16 suspension, revocation, or cancellation or remove an imposed  
17 restriction on operation of the autonomous motor vehicle if the  
18 authorization holder satisfies the requirements under subsection  
19 (3)(a) of this section.

20 **Sec. 13.** RCW 46.30.050 and 2020 c 182 s 1 are each amended to  
21 read as follows:

22 ~~(1) ((No entity may test an autonomous motor vehicle on any~~  
23 ~~public roadway under the department's autonomous vehicle self-~~  
24 ~~certification testing pilot program unless:~~

25 ~~(a) The entity holds an umbrella))~~ (a) A person operating an  
26 autonomous motor vehicle on any public road of this state without a  
27 human driver shall hold a liability insurance policy that covers the  
28 entity in an amount not less than ((five million dollars)) \$1,000,000  
29 per occurrence for damages by reason of bodily injury or death or  
30 property damage, caused by the operation of an autonomous motor  
31 vehicle ((for which information is provided under the autonomous  
32 vehicle self-certification testing pilot program; and

33 ~~(b) The entity maintains))~~ .

34 (b) Financial responsibility requirements under (a) of this  
35 subsection may be satisfied by:

36 (i) An insurance policy issued by an insurer licensed in  
37 Washington state; or

38 (ii) An insurance policy issued by a licensed surplus line broker  
39 authorized under RCW 48.15.040.

1        (c) No higher limits of insurance or additional coverages may be  
2 required solely due to a vehicle's use of an automated driving system  
3 other than the financial responsibility minimum requirements under  
4 this subsection (1).

5        (2) A person operating an autonomous motor vehicle on public  
6 roads in this state without a human driver shall maintain proof of  
7 this policy with the department in a form and manner specified by the  
8 department.

9        ~~((2))~~ (3) Requirements related to proof of motor vehicle  
10 insurance under RCW 46.30.020 and penalties for providing false  
11 evidence of motor vehicle insurance under RCW 46.30.040 are  
12 applicable to this section.

13        NEW SECTION. Sec. 14. RCW 46.92.010 (Testing—Self-certification  
14 pilot program—Information to be provided—Unique identification  
15 number—Notice—Fee—Public access—Operation) and 2021 c 193 s 1 &  
16 2020 c 182 s 2 are each repealed.

17        NEW SECTION. Sec. 15. This act takes effect October 1, 2026.

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