

Submitter: Bill Bradley  
On Behalf Of: ATU 757  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2671

Chair McLain, Chair Gorsek, and Members of the Committee:

The 5,500 school bus and transit professionals of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 are dedicated to the safety and connectivity of Oregon's communities.

As you consider HB 2671, we appreciate its strong framework around permitting, insurance, and data reporting. We want to offer a few key refinements to help the bill fully meet its goal of safe, responsible innovation.

We acknowledge the bill's approach to regulating highly automated vehicles (HAVs), especially in freight and commercial delivery. It is essential for any HAV over 10,000 pounds in Oregon to have a properly licensed, on-board operator especially during testing or in mixed traffic. These heavy vehicles pose real risks in the event of failure or malfunction, and human oversight is critical to making quick, responsible decisions when lives are at stake.

To ensure transparency and accountability in HAV operation, we recommend that the legislation include protections that allow operators to report safety concerns directly to ODOT without fear of retaliation.

HB 2671 should also make clear that fully driverless school bus and transit operations are explicitly prohibited. Our members do far more than drive. They de-escalate passenger disputes, assist riders with disabilities, respond to emergencies, and ensure children cross streets safely. They are often the first to prevent tragedies. No machine can replace that awareness or judgment. These critical roles demand human oversight at all times.

We do support the use of advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS), such as automatic braking, blind-spot alerts, and pedestrian detection. These tools can enhance safety when coupled with well-trained operators. Just as airline pilots undergo regular simulation-based training to manage automated systems, transit and school bus operators navigating crowded streets need comparable training and support. Oregon should invest in making this a reality as ADAS becomes more common.

The following recent incident underscores our critical concerns. During a pilot in Eugene, a self-steering bus disengaged unexpectedly. The operator was unable to regain control before the vehicle jumped a curb and jostled passengers. Thankfully,

no one was seriously hurt but the situation could have ended very differently. Lane Transit District immediately pulled the system from service. That experience reminds us that technology must always be supervised by trained professionals.

HB 2671 lays a solid foundation. Adding safeguards like prohibiting driverless school and transit vehicles, ensuring a process for operators to report directly to ODOT without fear of retaliation, supporting ADAS rollout with robust training, and requiring human oversight in heavy freight applications, Oregon can lead the way in safe, smart automation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We support the goal of this legislation and encourage the committee to incorporate the suggested refinements to ensure HB 2671 effectively protects all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Bill Bradley

Executive Board Officer, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757