

Submitter:

Douglas Allen

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Transportation

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4085

HB 4085 has numerous flaws that need correction before the Legislature considers passing it.

I didn't see any fees going to ODOT to pay for administering this bill, and when problems occur, the vehicle operators can't be given an immediate shut-down order, like when airplanes are found to be defective. After a shut-down order, this bill says that the company can simply assert that the problem is fixed. Also the problem has to cause a risk of death or actual bodily harm before ODOT can intervene.

While there are good reasons for some regulation at the state or national level, local jurisdictions should be able to tax, regulate, and charge fees related to operation of these vehicles, as well as the associated surveillance systems that go along with them. There are valid arguments that when systems are perfected and properly regulated, these vehicles could be safer and provide better quality access and transportation to certain populations, and, if properly regulated, might provide environmental benefits in terms of electrification or proper integration with mass transit systems.

Furthermore, there needs to be a broader discussion of the whole economic structure of who owns these vehicles, who decides the rates, why shouldn't they be classified as common carriers, how public costs are properly defrayed, proper insurance coverage, etc. The initial implementation of these vehicles is likely to be in urban areas, so local governments in urban areas should have a strong say about where and how they operate and at what cost. This bill, as written, is a failure in these regards.