



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

February 9, 2025

Chair McLain, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Boshart Davis and members of the House Transportation Committee,

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents over 300,000 workers across the state in every sector of the economy and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. As worker advocates, we have a keen interest in ensuring that AI is a tool to enhance employees' work and outcomes for Oregonians, not the opposite.

Unfortunately, HB 4085 would functionally do just that: pose significant concerns for workers who make their living driving taxis and ride-shares, but also pose significant safety concerns for Oregonians driving or using our roads, sidewalks and public areas.

On safety, experimental vehicles in California and Texas have behaved erratically and caused widespread problems, from striking pedestrians and animals to repeatedly interfering with emergency vehicle responses. Software glitches trap passengers in vehicles and cause gridlock during power outages. Vehicles fail to recognize crosswalks and road barriers. These dangers are apparent to regulators with hundreds of thousands of vehicles recalled for safety issues.

Further, research shows the technology behind autonomous vehicles is subject to the same racial and other biases of most AI platforms. This software performs more poorly identifying pedestrians with darker skin, and is worse at identifying children than adult pedestrians—a serious concern given their track record near schools and school buses.

Finally, tens of thousands of working-class Oregonians provide professional transportation services and the majority of these workers are immigrant, BIPOC, and low-wage. By incentivizing self-driving vehicles, it's far too likely that many of these workers will lose their jobs. This is not what Oregon's economy or community needs.

I had the pleasure to serve on the Governor's Task Force on AI, where a diverse group of stakeholders proposed clear Oregon values on the use of AI. Among them was the need for workers to be at the table in any decisions that affect their work and how critical it is that AI systems have human oversight.

We ask you to reject this bill and center these shared values in any and all future conversations on how technology will impact Oregonians going forward.