

Submitter: Kevin Kincaid
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4085

Dear Representative McLain and members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Kincaid. I am writing you to urge you to vote no on HB 4085. This bill seeks to fast-track the ability of autonomous vehicle networks to operate in our state without considering any of the consequences.

To begin with, autonomous vehicles networks are far from the perfect solution often presented by Waymo and other companies. They create additional cars on the roads, and recent studies have shown that half of their miles traveled are en route to or waiting for passengers. They frequently have issues in unusual situations, such as during blackouts, and there have been repeated incidents where they block emergency vehicles from passing. Another concerning feature is the large number of cameras that cover Waymo vehicles both outside and inside. Given the increasing surveillance being utilized against citizens by the federal government, it is worth considering putting vehicles for a tech company on our streets.

Beyond that, this bill provides minimal restrictions on autonomous vehicles. Although they imply these networks will support disabled people, current Waymo vehicles are not wheelchair accessible, and this bill only recommend the networks refer wheelchair riders to existing options. There is also the question of tickets. In the event an autonomous vehicle breaks the law or impedes emergency vehicles, how will a fine be leveled against the network? This is a clear issue that should be addressed by any law.

But by far the worst aspect of this bill is how it removes any opportunity for cities to regulate these networks. Autonomous vehicles are cars, and will put wear and tear on roads, and should be taxed as such. This network would likely operate in Portland first, and both the city council and PBOT should have the ability to oversee the transportation system of their city, especially given how our legislature is only in session for part of the year.

I urge you to vote against this bill. Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,
Kevin Kincaid