



American Council of the Blind

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March 28, 2017

Subject: Self-driving car legislation

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon General Assembly,

I am writing to express the support of the American Council of the Blind for legislation regarding autonomous vehicles (AVs), or self-driving cars. Self-driving cars have the potential to transform how Americans travel and redefine the automotive industry altogether.

At the American Council of the Blind, the foundation of our work is our belief that it is the right of every blind person in this country to be included in society and it is the responsibility of government at all levels to provide the infrastructure of services and equipment that will allow us to fully participate in our communities. We believe that the safe testing and deployment of self-driving cars will expand opportunities for the disabled to experience a much greater level of personal independence and freedom of mobility based on their own needs and timetable.

We also believe that safety should be the driving principle of any public policy approach that governs the testing and deployment of self-driving cars. Oregon has legislation before it that puts safety first and for that reason, we support its passage.

To realize the potential of this new form of mobility, we believe Oregon should require a framework for rolling out these vehicles in a safe and orderly way. Legislation should clarify that if a vehicle can follow all state and federal laws, including registration and insurance, it is legal to operate. By establishing clarity in state law, we will ensure that the benefits of innovative technology can be realized in Oregon, delivering promise for increased safety, economic growth, and access to mobility for a greater number of citizens.

Proceeding in a measured, responsible manner in the testing and deployment of self-driving cars is the best way to ensure safety. Legislation in Oregon should authorize and support the type of testing and operation that can help AVs become a reality sooner and, most importantly, in a safe manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Anthony Stephens". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Anthony Stephens
Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs
American Council of the Blind