

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Transportation

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB4085

I am a resident of the Roseway/Madison South neighborhood and high school biology teacher in the Portland metro area. I am writing in extreme opposition of introducing driverless vehicles such as Waymo into Oregon. A decision to allow driverless vehicles would impact the people of Oregon and be a stark contradiction to Oregonian values.

As many Oregonians are already struggling to make ends meet, replacing yet another human job with automotive technology is actively harmful to the over 10,000 people in Portland alone who rely on income from driving taxis or ride share services. The decision to allow driverless vehicles would punish working class Oregonians finding a means to make ends meet, many of who are using driving services as a second or third source of income in order to afford cost of living. As Oregon faces disproportionately high rates of homelessness, reducing income to any Oregonians is in direct conflict with the values and goals that the Oregon legislature has been promising its constituents that it would prioritize.

Further, as Portland is a national leader in public transportation, and the state has a variety of policies in place aimed towards reducing GHG emissions, Oregon should not be adopting any new policies that will encourage more single occupancy vehicle commuting. The demand for the manufacturing of more cars, whether or not these vehicles are electric or utilize biofuels, does not come without significant carbon emissions and harvesting of precious metals. Oregon policymakers passed a bill last summer to require climate justice education in all schools in Oregon. It would be irresponsible, and even hypocritical, for policymakers to require children to learn about climate justice and teachers to integrate new state teaching policies while choosing to adopt the integration of something as frivolous as driverless vehicles into our communities. This decision would reinforce a message that too many young people already believe: that their individual efforts and contributions to climate action do not matter.

My own neighborhood is a gateway to the PDX airport, and I have personal concerns about the safety of my neighbors, particularly children and pets, in the path of a driverless vehicle. These concerns stem directly from recorded incidents involving driverless vehicles in cities that they currently are permitted to operate in. Outside of safety concerns, the city of Portland has lost a significant amount of critical space outside of local businesses for customers to park vehicles and bicycles, as these spaces have been filled by docking stations for privatized (and very often un-utilized) means of transportation such as e-bikes and e-Scooters. I cannot help but wonder

which public parking spaces these driverless vehicles would take up in front of businesses and in neighborhoods when not in use.

Voting in favor of driverless cars is a vote against the people of Oregon, and the priorities and values Oregon has promised its citizens to uphold. Thank you for your time.