

Submitter: Cory Schafer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4085

My name is Cory Schafer, and I'm a blind Oregonian and a member of the National Federation of the Blind of Oregon. I'm writing to ask you to vote yes on House Bill 4085.

For most people, autonomous vehicles are about technology. For me, they're about safety and independence. Every day, I rely on crosswalks, my cane, and my guide dog—but I'm still at the mercy of human drivers who get distracted or fail to yield. Human error causes 94% of car crashes, and AVs can help change that. Unlike human drivers, autonomous vehicles don't get distracted—they see 360 degrees, stay alert, and keep people like me safe.

AVs also protect the rights of people who use service animals. I know too many blind Oregonians who have been refused rides or treated unfairly because they have a guide dog. An AV doesn't care—it will never cancel a ride or drive away when it sees a service animal, which finally makes the ADA work in real life. I just recently got left at a store because my driver said I took longer than five minutes. I got my items came out and she had driven away.

Finally, HB 4085 sets a statewide standard. A patchwork of local rules can trap blind Oregonians in certain cities. With autonomous vehicles, I could travel across city lines freely, hold a job, visit family, and have true independence. Paratransit is helpful, but it can't give me "on-demand" freedom the way AVs can.

Autonomous vehicles aren't science fiction—they're a real tool that can make Oregon safer and more accessible. Please vote yes on HB 4085 to support blind Oregonians like me.

Thank you,
Cory Schafer
National Federation of the Blind of Oregon