

Reason Foundation Review of Nevada Senate Bill 395 (2025)



Automated vehicle technology could greatly improve road safety and efficiency. Unfortunately, Senate Bill 395 would move Nevada in the wrong direction.

1. The Only State to Outlaw Driverless Trucks?

- ❖ SB 395 would prohibit operation on public roads of an automated vehicle weighing more than 26,000 lbs or one capable of carrying more than 8 passengers unless a human operator is seated within the vehicle.
- ❖ This would deter the introduction of safer automated trucks by preventing the realization of their business benefits.
- ❖ If enacted, Nevada would become the *only state* in the country to enshrine in statute a blanket, preemptive ban on driverless trucks and buses.

2. Embraces an Approach Rejected in California for Being Anti-Business

- ❖ SB 395 reflects the legislative approach first proposed in California in 2023 (AB 316) aimed at banning driverless trucks.
- ❖ In 2023 and 2024 (AB 2286), California Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed the proposed ban on driverless trucks as being unnecessary and harmful to the state's reputation for innovation.
- ❖ In 2011, Nevada became the first state to explicitly authorize automated vehicles (AB 511). SB 395 would move Nevada from first to last.

3. Driverless Vehicles Are Already Making Roads Safer

- ❖ Automated driving systems cannot drive drunk, drugged, drowsy, or distracted and are programmed to follow the rules of the road. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, human error is a critical factor in more than 90% of vehicle crashes.
- ❖ According to the latest research by leading reinsurance company Swiss Re and automated vehicle technology developer Waymo, Waymo's automated driving system is already far safer when compared to a typical human driver—with an 88% reduction in property damage claims and a 92% reduction in bodily injury claims.
- ❖ According to Reason Foundation's *28th Annual Highway Report*, Nevada's local road safety declined more than any other state year-over-year, with its rank falling from #7 to #37.

4. No New Authorities Are Needed to Prohibit Unsafe Driverless Vehicles

- ❖ Nevada law already prohibits operating driverless vehicles that fail to follow the rules of the road or do not perform fail-safe procedures safely. Falsely certifying compliance with any of these provisions is a gross misdemeanor (NV Rev Stat § 482A.220).

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