

PSAB comments on  
**Highly Automated Vehicle Deployment**

*PA House Transportation Committee March 2022*



PSAB is grateful for the opportunity to provide our perspective to the Pa House Transportation Committee regarding automated vehicles. Since 1911, The Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) has represented the commonwealth's boroughs seeking to bring their interests to lawmakers at all levels of government. Today, with everchanging technological developments which can enhance the quality of life for our municipalities, seeking the insights of those established communities is a wise choice. We can appreciate the goal of the sponsors of **House Bill 2398** and look forward to helping interested parties achieve their ends. Moreover, we would add that true success will be found in a collaborative process of exchange and interaction.

The Association has been aware of and monitoring the development of this technology and other related technologies impacting the motoring public since its inception. Considering their diverse infrastructure and design attributes boroughs offer a unique setting concerning the HAV (Highly Automated Vehicle), PDD (Personal Delivery Device) and UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle). In its engagements related to these and other transportation advancements PSAB and its boroughs have realized the deployment of a variety of tech advances which benefitted transportation, commerce and the quality of life of our residents. *Behold the lowly red light* – enough said! Therefore, we believe it is fitting that the voice of our boroughs be recognized as a worthy contributor to guarantee of success throughout this process.

Seeking to contribute to the success of such technology PSAB would present that one of its most critical concerns is the *SAFETY* of all involved and affected. We note in the bill's co-sponsor memo one of the foundational arguments is safety and how current trends in highway fatalities is unacceptable, we agree. HAVs working with traffic signal networks and/or LED streetlight/crosswalk modules offer pedestrian as well as operator safety. To digress, sensible LIDAR/RADAR deployment offers similar results adding to our collective goal of safe travel and interconnected commerce. We would add that as a stakeholder in the recently released "2022 Pennsylvania Strategic Highway Safety Plan" PSAB's participation contributed to the Autonomous Vehicle Technology implementation timeline cited by PennDOT on page 47 of the report.

In closing, to keep this statement brief we have one concern which above all is probably the one that most municipalities share – *preemption*. PSAB has demonstrated by its past involvements that it is not taking a defensive position regarding these advancements. Ours is seeking collaboration in hopes of avoiding unintended consequences, which we have all witnessed at some time in our policy careers. In seeking the successful implementation of HAVs boroughs want to contribute with the specialized knowledge, experience, and resources they possess for the mutual benefit of all involved. We believe that a creative collaborative can achieve results and develop a model for even greater achievement.



Coalition for Safe Autonomous Vehicles and Electrification

**Testimony of the Coalition for Safe Autonomous Vehicles and Electrification**

**Before the Pennsylvania House Transportation Committee**

**on**

**House Bill 2398 (sponsored by Rep. Oberlander)**

**March 17, 2022**

The Coalition for Safe Autonomous Vehicles and Electrification (SAVE Coalition) expresses its support for House Bill 2398 and appreciates Chairmen Hennessey and Carroll and the members of the committee convening a public hearing on this legislation. This bill would create a path for the safe deployment of autonomous vehicles in the Commonwealth. In particular, we support the inclusion of important updates to the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code to recognize existing and emerging autonomous vehicle technologies that will help spur safety innovation, sustainability and growth in the design of future vehicles.

The advent of autonomous vehicle technology has allowed for industry to go beyond traditional vehicle designs and create innovative vehicles not previously contemplated. For example, autonomy allows for vehicles with no driver and enables dozens of safety innovations in vehicle design, including even vehicles with no occupants at all - just goods. However, the Pennsylvania vehicle code still assumes items like mirrors, windshield wipers, dashboard indicators, and other types of manual controls that support human operation of vehicles but that no longer serve a functional or safety purpose for these types of vehicles.

Because SAVE members' vehicles are designed to be exclusively operated by the automated driving system (ADS), they render obsolete many of the aforementioned equipment requirements while also providing the potential for a higher level of safety for all Pennsylvania roadway users.

Autonomous, all-electric vehicles have the potential to help improve road safety and expand access for people with disabilities or who live in food deserts, while at the same time reducing tailpipe emissions. By modernizing the vehicle code with this technical fix to enable the operation of autonomous vehicles with novel designs on Pennsylvania roads, this provision helps to expand and accelerate these benefits in the Commonwealth. It will also further enable manufacturers to develop novel vehicle designs and to invest confidently in Pennsylvania.

For these reasons, we support HB 2398 and the inclusion of the provision updating Title 75 to modernize vehicle equipment standards for certain highly autonomous vehicles.

The SAVE Coalition is a group of companies building all-electric, autonomous vehicles with innovative designs to improve road safety and sustainability. For more information about the SAVE Coalition, please visit [www.savecoalition.com](http://www.savecoalition.com). We appreciate the opportunity to express support for this important piece of legislation.