

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1562

5 By: Representative McCollum
6 By: Senator L. Eads
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING AUTONOMOUS
10 VEHICLES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
11

Subtitle

12
13 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING AUTONOMOUS
14 VEHICLES.
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18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
19

20 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 27-51-2001, concerning the definitions for
21 an autonomous vehicle and fully autonomous vehicle operated under an
22 autonomous vehicle pilot program, is amended to add additional subdivisions
23 to read as follows:

24 (8) "Human operator" means an individual who operates a vehicle
25 by manually controlling the:

26 (A) Brake;

27 (B) Accelerator pedal;

28 (C) Steering wheel; or

29 (D) Transmission gear selection;

30 (9) "On-demand driverless capable vehicle network" means a
31 transportation service network that uses a software application or other
32 digital means to dispatch autonomous vehicles or fully autonomous vehicles
33 for purposes of transporting persons or goods, including without limitation
34 vehicles used for:

35 (A) For-hire transportation;

36 (B) The transportation of multiple passengers who agree to



1 share the ride in whole or in part; or

2 (C) Public transportation; and

3 (10) "Remote operator" means an individual who is:

4 (A) Able to provide remote assistance to a fully
 5 autonomous vehicle in driverless operation; or

6 (B) Not seated in a position to manually control a
 7 vehicle's:

8 (i) Brake;

9 (ii) Accelerator pedal;

10 (iii) Steering wheel; or

11 (iv) Transmission gear selection.

12
 13 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 27-51-2002 is amended to read as follows:
 14 27-51-2002. Operation of autonomous vehicle.

15 (a)~~(1)~~ An autonomous vehicle or a fully autonomous vehicle may be
 16 operated in this state under an autonomous vehicle ~~pilot~~ program approved by
 17 the State Highway Commission.

18 ~~(2) The autonomous vehicle pilot program is automatically~~
 19 ~~approved sixty (60) days after the date the autonomous vehicle pilot program~~
 20 ~~is submitted to the commission for approval.~~

21 (b) An autonomous vehicle ~~pilot~~ program shall include without
 22 limitation the following:

23 (1) A statement of the commercial purpose of the autonomous
 24 vehicle ~~pilot~~ program;

25 (2) ~~The identification of any additional requirements for proof~~
 26 Proof that the autonomous vehicle program complies with the minimum liability
 27 insurance coverage requirements for a motor carrier of property under 49
 28 C.F.R. § 387.9 as it existed on January 1, 2021 ~~insurance under the Motor~~
 29 ~~Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act, § 27-19-101 et seq., and § 27-22-101 et~~
 30 ~~seq.;~~

31 (3) A statement acknowledging that:

32 (A)~~(i)~~ The autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous vehicle
 33 is capable of complying with all applicable traffic and motor vehicle safety
 34 laws of this state and rules adopted by the Office of Motor Vehicle,
 35 including without limitation the laws and rules concerning the capability to
 36 safely negotiate railroad crossings ~~unless an exemption for the operation of~~

1 ~~autonomous vehicles or fully autonomous vehicles at railroad crossings is~~
 2 ~~granted by the department.~~

3 ~~(ii) The department shall consult with railroad~~
 4 ~~companies operating in the state when considering an exemption that affects~~
 5 ~~the operation of autonomous vehicles or fully autonomous vehicles at railroad~~
 6 ~~crossings;~~

7 (B) The fully autonomous vehicle is capable of achieving a
 8 ~~reasonably safe state~~ minimal risk condition if a failure of the automated
 9 driving system occurs that renders the automated driving system unable to
 10 perform the entire dynamic driving task; ~~and~~

11 (C) The autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous vehicle
 12 meets Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Regulations, 49. C.F.R. Part
 13 571 as it existed on January 1, 2021, for the vehicle’s model year, except to
 14 the extent an exemption has been granted under applicable federal law, and
 15 all other applicable safety standards and performance requirements stated in
 16 state and federal law and rules adopted by the commission; and

17 (D) A The remote operator of a fully autonomous vehicle
 18 involved in a motor vehicle accident is capable of meeting the requirements
 19 of §§ 27-53-101, 27-53-102, and 27-53-105; and

20 (4) A description of how a fully autonomous vehicle is capable
 21 of meeting the requirement of subdivision ~~(b)(3)(C)~~ (b)(3)(D) of this
 22 section.

23 (c) For the purposes of this subchapter, a person may operate+

24 ~~(1) A~~ a fully autonomous vehicle that is not equipped with:

- 25 ~~(A)(1)~~ (A)(1) Seat belts;
- 26 ~~(B)(2)~~ (B)(2) A steering wheel; or
- 27 ~~(C)(3)~~ (C)(3) A rearview mirror; ~~and~~

28 ~~(2) A maximum of three (3) autonomous vehicles or fully~~
 29 ~~autonomous vehicles simultaneously on the streets and highways of this state.~~

30 ~~(d) The commission shall adopt rules necessary for the implementation~~
 31 ~~of this subchapter.~~ An autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous vehicle shall
 32 be registered and titled as required under the Motor Vehicle Administration,
 33 Certificate of Title, and Antitheft Act, § 27-14-101 et seq.

34
 35 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 27, Chapter 51, Subchapter 20, is
 36 amended to add additional sections to read as follows:

1 27-51-2003. Operation of on-demand driverless capable vehicle network.

2 (a) A person may operate an on-demand driverless capable vehicle
3 network in the state.

4 (b) An on-demand driverless capable vehicle network may connect a
5 passenger or goods to a fully autonomous vehicle either exclusively or as
6 part of a digital network that also connects passengers or goods to human
7 drivers who provide transportation services in vehicles that are not fully
8 autonomous vehicles.

9
10 27-51-2004. Licensing requirements.

11 (a) A human operator of an autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous
12 vehicle is required to have a valid driver's license for the class of vehicle
13 being operated.

14 (b) A remote operator of a fully autonomous vehicle is required to
15 have a valid driver's license for the class of vehicle being operated.

16
17 27-51-2005. Controlling authority.

18 (a) Except as otherwise provided by law, the State Highway Commission
19 shall implement the laws governing autonomous vehicles and fully autonomous
20 vehicles under this subchapter.

21 (b) The commission shall adopt rules necessary for the implementation
22 of this subchapter.

23 (c) Except as otherwise provided by law, a local entity may not impose
24 additional requirements on autonomous vehicles or fully autonomous vehicles,
25 including without limitation:

26 (1) Requirements providing for the safe operation of autonomous
27 vehicle or fully autonomous vehicles; or

28 (2) The imposition of a tax on:

29 (A) An autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous vehicle; or

30 (B) The operation of an autonomous vehicle or fully
31 autonomous vehicle.

32
33 27-51-2006. Liability.

34 (a) The liability for an accident involving an autonomous vehicle or
35 fully autonomous vehicle is determined in accordance with applicable state or
36 federal law.

1 (b) However, the original manufacturer of a vehicle converted by a
2 third party into an autonomous vehicle or fully autonomous vehicle is not
3 liable in any legal action.

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