

Date of Hearing: April 4, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
Jim Frazier, Chair  
AB 2682 (Chang) – As Amended March 18, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Autonomous vehicles

**SUMMARY:** Requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), upon the development of a model state policy on autonomous vehicles by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), to hold public hearings on the model policy and consider, to the extent authorized by other law, conforming DMV regulations with the model policy.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Requires DMV, by January 1, 2015, to adopt regulations applicable to the operation of autonomous vehicles on public roads, for both testing and non-testing purposes.
- 2) Requires DMV to hold public hearings on the adoption of any regulation applicable to the operation of an autonomous vehicle without the presence of a driver inside the vehicle.
- 3) Specifies that federal regulations promulgated by NHTSA shall supersede provisions of existing state law when found to be in conflict with other state laws or regulations related to autonomous vehicles.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** DMV is currently in the process of adopting regulations applicable to the operation of autonomous vehicles, pursuant to SB 1298 (Padilla), Chapter 570, Statutes of 2012. DMV adopted regulations for the operation of autonomous vehicles for testing purposes in May 2014, and has yet to adopt regulations for the deployment of autonomous vehicles for non-testing purposes out of a desire to receive more input from the public and stakeholders before making a final regulatory action. Throughout the process of drafting these regulations, DMV has consulted with manufacturers, consumer and privacy groups, technology companies, universities, and other government entities, including NHTSA. However, because there are no existing federal guidelines for state regulations on autonomous vehicles, DMV has been placed in the position of developing regulations for new, technologically complex concepts with little outside experience on which the department can rely or to which it can refer.

In December 2015, DMV released an early draft of the regulations for the full deployment of autonomous vehicles for public review. DMV currently estimates it will initiate the final regulatory process this summer.

In January of this year, United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Anthony Foxx announced President Obama's Fiscal Year 2017 budget proposal to allocate nearly \$4 billion over ten years towards accelerating the development of autonomous vehicle technology through real-world pilot projects. Additionally, Secretary Foxx announced that NHTSA will, within six months, both consult with industry and other stakeholders to develop

guidance on the safe deployment and operation of autonomous vehicles, and consult with state partners, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, and other stakeholders to develop a model state policy on automated vehicles that offers a path to consistent national policy.

This bill would require DMV to hold public hearings on this model state policy and consider, to the extent authorized by other law, conforming DMV's autonomous vehicle regulations to the model policy. According to the author, this bill would ensure California remains a technological leader when the model policy is issued in July, and competitive for any new federal funds that become available in the future.

According to DMV, the department has been in constant communication with NHTSA on the topic of its autonomous vehicle regulations and will likely be able to easily comport its regulatory package to NHTSA's model state policy.

*Related Legislation:* AB 1592 (Bonilla) would authorize the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to conduct a pilot project for the testing of autonomous vehicles under specific conditions. AB 1592 is scheduled to be heard by this committee on April 4, 2016.

AB 2866 (Gatto) would require DMV and the Department of the California Highway Patrol to conduct a pilot project in three counties in conjunction with one or more manufacturers of autonomous vehicles to test the safety and feasibility of operating autonomous vehicles on public roads. AB 2866 is awaiting a hearing by this committee.

*Previous Legislation:* SB 1298 (Padilla), Chapter 570, Statutes of 2012, established conditions for the operation of autonomous vehicles upon public roadways.

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

None on file

### **Opposition**

None on file

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