



KANSAS
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES

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Senate Transportation Committee
February 1, 2022
SB 379

Kansas Association of Counties
Neutral Testimony

Chairman Petersen and members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing the Kansas Association of Counties to offer neutral testimony on SB 379, which establishes regulations for autonomous vehicles.

KAC and its member counties understand that as technology advances, autonomous vehicles will be on the roadway with other vehicles, and it is important to establish regulations for those vehicles. KAC is concerned, however, that the current regulations proposed are ahead of the technology.

Sec. 1(a)(1) defines “automated driving system” as capable of performing all aspects of entire dynamic driving task on a sustained basis. Sec. 1(a)(2) says that such a system is capable of performing “any maneuvers necessary to respond to a failure of the system.” There may need to be a more technical definition, or some rule and regulatory authority for the Department of Transportation to more clearly define what the expectation of those maneuvers would be.

It is also unclear what the meaning of Sec. 3(b)(5) means. It says that the vehicle would be “capable of achieving minimal risk of harm or injury in the event there is a failure of the automated driving system that renders the automated driving system unable to perform the entire dynamic driving task.” Given what we already know about cars and car crashes, it is unclear how an autonomous vehicle or vehicle manufacturer would be able to make this type of assertion.

Counties are responsible for the maintenance of a considerable amount of roadway in Kansas. Clarity in understanding how these vehicles will use the road, where they are authorized and what they are required to be capable of under state statute are important aspects of the regulatory regime under which they will operate.

KAC asks that the committee consider this carefully as we prepare for this new technology.

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