



September 21, 2023

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: VETO ASSEMBLY BILL 316

Governor Newsom,

The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) writes to urge the veto of Assembly Bill 316 (Aguiar-Curry), which would permanently ban automated commercial motor vehicle (CMV) operations without a “human safety operator” present, a requirement that prevents the growth of innovation and the adoption of safe and efficient technologies in automated trucking.

AUVSI is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of uncrewed systems and robotics across domains, representing corporations and professionals from more than 60 countries involved in industry, government, and academia. Included in our membership are companies in the vehicle automation sector, specifically those businesses dedicated to automated goods movement technologies. AUVSI represents companies working in automated trucking, automated low-speed delivery devices, and automated warehouse yard and internal warehouse robotics.

California has long been a leader in technological innovation, curating an environment in which new industries can develop and thrive. AB 316 compromises this legacy, imposing a preemptive ban that circumvents the current safe regulatory process and will have a chilling effect on current and future industry investment. Several other states have already embraced automated CMVs, and this measure leaves the door open for them to take the mantle from California as an industry leader, with all subsequent economic and workforce benefits to follow.

Further, the safety concerns raised by the bill's proponents are unfounded. The industry has consistently demonstrated across multiple states the ability of automated vehicle technology on vehicles larger than 10,000 lbs. to test, deploy, and perform safely. California itself already has numerous checks in place to ensure public safety is at the forefront of AV development and deployment, including three separate bodies with oversight authority, not to mention the guidance from federal authorities.

Automated CMVs hold the potential to transform road safety, removing the risk of human error and dangerous driving behavior. With traffic fatalities at over 4,000 in just California this past year, it is a critical time to invest in this life-saving technology, not shy away from it.

AUVSI was disappointed to see AB 316 pass the legislature this past week. The AV industry is on the cusp of a new era, and this measure will halt all progress in California. We further concur with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) about the potential negative impacts of the bill on both the industry and the State. We urge you to continue to support this life-saving technology and veto AB 316.

Respectfully,

Michael Robbins

Michael Robbins
Chief Advocacy Officer
AUVSI