



TECHNET
THE VOICE OF THE
INNOVATION ECONOMY

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The Honorable Thomas F. Patton
Ohio Senate
Senate Building 1
Capitol Square Ground Floor 042
Columbus, OH

Re: TechNet opposition to anti-innovative provisions outlined in HB 54

Dear Senator Patton,

I write to you in strong opposition to language contained on page 178 in HB 54, that would foreclose autonomous trucking innovation in Ohio.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over 4.5 million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, artificial intelligence, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, transportation, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance.

Autonomous trucking technology has the potential to significantly enhance supply chain efficiency, reduce fuel consumption, and lower costs for businesses and consumers. Many of these systems have been rigorously tested and have demonstrated improved safety outcomes by reducing human error, which is responsible for the vast majority of roadway accidents. By imposing a blanket requirement for human operators, this provision would stifle innovation and put the Ohio at a competitive disadvantage in the global logistics industry. Additionally, a requirement for human operators would have a direct and negative impact on the testing and validation work on AVs being done at the Transportation Research Center (TRC) in Columbus, Ohio, putting the state at risk of falling behind other states, like Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Texas, in this area.

Furthermore, the transportation sector is currently experiencing a severe driver shortage, and automation offers a viable solution to maintaining the flow of goods across the country. Ohio has to date provided a welcoming environment to autonomous vehicle development and should continue to do so.

We appreciate the opportunity to opine on this legislation, however, we must oppose this provision of the budget. Provisions such as this require thoughtful consideration and should not be rushed through the legislative process. If the Budget Bill contained a provision to study this issue in lieu of the policy proposals

included currently, we would support that. This will allow stakeholders the opportunity to engage with the legislature on these issues.

If you have any questions regarding TechNet's opposition, please contact Tyler Diers, Executive Director of TechNet Midwest at tdiers@technet.org or 630-400-3439.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Diers', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tyler Diers
Executive Director, Midwest
TechNet