



March 1, 2023

The Honorable Laura Friedman, Chair
Assembly Transportation Committee
California State Capitol
1021 O Street, RM 1100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: OPPOSE - AB 316 (Aguiar-Curry) – Relating to Autonomous Vehicles

Dear Chair Friedman and members of the committee,

Chamber of Progress, a tech industry coalition promoting technology's progressive future, writes in **opposition to AB 316 (Aguiar-Curry)**, which would require a human to be present even after autonomous trucks have demonstrated their safety.

Chamber of Progress is devoted to a progressive society, economy, workforce, and consumer climate by supporting public policies at the federal and state level that will build a fairer, more inclusive country in which all people benefit from technological leap. Our corporate partners include companies like Cruise, Waymo, and Zoox, but our partners do not have a vote on or veto over our positions.

We are strong supporters of autonomous trucking as an important solution to the growing demand for timely shipping of agricultural goods and products.

Autonomous trucking in California is essential for continued growth of the agricultural sector and the well-being of California's farmers, the entire Central Valley economy, and food distribution to communities around the nation. Increased demand for food and other products coupled with the lack of available human workforce threatens all farmers' ability to transport agricultural goods nationally and overseas.

Additionally, across the country turnover in the trucking industry is very high. According to American Trucking Associations, the average annual turnover rate for long haul drivers at big firms is 90%.¹ High turnover and widespread job vacancies result in

¹Michelle Fleury, *How will the US deal with a shortage of 80,000 truckers?*, BBC News, (Dec. 2021)
<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-59136957>

significant delays to product shipments and rising prices for basic necessities. The Port of Los Angeles reported that 30% of their port's appointments for truckers were going unused, largely because of the driver shortage.²

Further, a survey conducted by Morning Consult commissioned by our organization found that 60% of Democratic voters and 75% of labor union members supported autonomous vehicles being tested in their state.

We share your concerns and commitment to safety, however, a 2021 report estimates that autonomous vehicles will not only match but exceed human safety levels by 2024.³

Mandating a human driver in perpetuity does not recognize AV technology's rapid developments and potential to be of great benefit for our state, nation and ultimately world. This legislation would set back California's efforts at being a leader in innovation and unnecessarily prolong the future promise of autonomous trucking for California.

For these reasons, we must respectfully oppose AB 316 and urge a NO vote.

Respectfully,



Tepring Piquado, PhD

Senior Director of Government Relations, Western US
Chamber of Progress

²Madeleine Ngo, The Biggest Kink in America's Supply Chain: Not Enough Truckers, NY Times, (Nov. 2021)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/us/politics/trucker-shortage-supply-chain.html>

³ Dr. James Jeffs, Autonomous Cars, Robotaxis & Sensors 2022-2042, IDTechEx (2022)
<https://www.idtechex.com/en/research-report/autonomous-cars-robotaxis-and-sensors-2022-2042/832>