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Kansas Senate Transportation Committee
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TechNet

SB 379 Autonomous Vehicles – TechNet Concerns, Opposition

Chairman Petersen, Vice Chairman Claeys and Honorable Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share TechNet’s perspective on SB 379.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives. Our diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses, ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over four million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance.

On behalf of TechNet and its membership, we must respectfully oppose SB 379. We encourage lawmakers to pursue a balanced approach to building the legal framework governing autonomous vehicles (AV) in the state of Kansas. Accordingly, we must oppose SB 379 as currently drafted because it creates a framework for AV in Kansas that will limit the operation of this technology to only one segment of innovators and consumers. Section 3, Paragraph (a) specifically limits the operation of AV technology in Kansas only to commercial B2B transport that is also intrastate and conducted on the “middle mile.”

While we oppose SB 379 in its current form, we are eager to work with the Committee in crafting AV policy that does not lock Kansas into a single, highly limited, intrastate use case for AVs. Such an approach would severely restrict both competition and the State's ability to realize the many safety, efficiency, and economic benefits of AVs. TechNet urges the committee to consider amending SB 379 to avoid these negative ramifications, and stands ready to partner with the Committee in crafting balanced AV policy in Kansas that would encourage competition, investment, and innovation.

Thank you for your time today, we look forward to our continued engagement on this important issue and I am happy to answer any questions from the Committee.