

Matt MacPherson proposes the following substitute bill:

**Autonomous Vehicle Amendments**

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Matt MacPherson**

Senate Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill modifies provisions related to autonomous vehicles and authorizes the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (GOEO) to award grants for autonomous vehicle deployment.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- defines terms;
- provides and updates definitions related to automated driving systems, connected vehicle technology, and driverless operation;
- authorizes GOEO to award autonomous vehicle industry incentive grants;
- directs a large public transit district to request information related to implementing an autonomous vehicle public transit network;
- directs the Department of Transportation to request information related to autonomous vehicles; and
- makes technical changes.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

None

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**41-26-102.1**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 134

**63I-2-217**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 7

**63I-2-272**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 277

ENACTS:

**17B-2a-829**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

29 63N-3-1801, Utah Code Annotated 1953

30 72-1-219, Utah Code Annotated 1953



32 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

33 Section 1. Section 17B-2a-829 is enacted to read:

34 **17B-2a-829 . Information on autonomous vehicle transit.**

35 (1) A large public transit district shall complete a request for information in accordance  
36 with Section 63G-6a-409 to gather information regarding a large scale implementation  
37 of an autonomous vehicle network for public transit.

38 (2) A large public transit district shall coordinate the request for information described in  
39 Subsection (1) with relevant stakeholders.

40 (3) The request for information described in Subsection (1) shall include inquiries  
41 addressing:

42 (a) autonomous vehicle technology;

43 (b) timelines and feasibility for implementation of an autonomous vehicle public transit  
44 network;

45 (c) financial implications;

46 (d) benefits and drawbacks of different strategies; and

47 (e) other considerations relevant to autonomous vehicle public transit.

48 (4) On or before November 30, 2026, a large public transit district shall report to the  
49 Transportation Interim Committee regarding the information gathered under this section.

50 Section 2. Section 41-26-102.1 is amended to read:

51 **41-26-102.1 . Definitions.**

52 **As used in this chapter:**

53 (1) "ADS-dedicated vehicle" means a vehicle:

54 (a) designed to be operated [~~exclusively~~] by a level four ADS or level five ADS for all  
55 trips within the given operational design domain limitations of the ADS, if any[-]; and

56 (b) that conforms to all applicable U.S. federal motor vehicle safety, bumper, and theft  
57 prevention standards in effect on the date of the vehicle's manufacture.

58 (2) "ADS-equipped vehicle" means a vehicle with a level three, level four, or level five  
59 ADS that is designed for:

60 (a) complete trips in driverless operation under routine or normal operating conditions  
61 within the vehicle's operation design domain; or

62 (b) operation by an in-vehicle driver.

63 [(2)] (3)(a) "Automated driving system" or "ADS" means the hardware and software that  
64 are:

65 (i) collectively capable of performing the entire dynamic driving task on a sustained  
66 basis, regardless of whether the ADS is limited to a specific operational design  
67 domain, if any[-] ; and

68 (ii) conforming to all applicable U.S. federal motor vehicle safety, bumper, and theft  
69 prevention standards in effect on the date of the vehicle's manufacture.

70 (b) "Automated driving system" or "ADS" is used specifically to describe a level three,  
71 four, or five driving automation system.

72 [(3)] (4) "Commission" means the State Tax Commission as defined in Section 59-1-101.

73 [(4)] (5) "Conventional driver" means a human driver who is onboard the motor vehicle and  
74 manually performs some or all of the following actions in order to operate a vehicle:

75 (a) braking;

76 (b) accelerating;

77 (c) steering; and

78 (d) transmission gear selection input devices.

79 [(5)] (6)(a) "Dispatch" means to place an ADS-equipped vehicle into service in driverless  
80 operation by engaging the ADS.

81 (b) "Dispatch" includes software-enabled dispatch of multiple ADS-equipped motor  
82 vehicles in driverless operation that may complete multiple trips involving pick-up  
83 and drop-off of passengers or goods throughout a day or other pre-defined periods of  
84 service, and which may involve multiple agents performing various tasks related to  
85 the dispatch function.

86 [(6)] (7) "Division" means the Motor Vehicle Division of the commission, created in  
87 Section 41-1a-106.

88 [(7)] (8) "Driverless operation" means the operation of an ADS-equipped vehicle in which:

89 (a) no on-board user is present; or

90 (b) no on-board user is a human driver with a valid driver license or fallback-ready user.

91 [(8)] (9) "Driverless operation dispatcher" means a user who dispatches an ADS-equipped  
92 vehicle in driverless operation.

93 [(9)] (10) "Driving automation system" means the hardware and software collectively  
94 capable of performing part or all of the dynamic driving task on a sustained basis.

95 [(10)] (11) "Driving automation system feature" means a specific function of a driving  
96 automation system.

97 [(11)] (12)(a) "Dynamic driving task" means all of the real-time operational and tactical  
98 functions required to operate a motor vehicle in on-road traffic, including:

99 (i) lateral vehicle motion control through steering;

100 (ii) longitudinal motion control through acceleration and deceleration;

101 (iii) monitoring the driving environment through object and event detection,  
102 recognition, classification, and response preparation;

103 (iv) object and event response execution;

104 (v) maneuver planning; and

105 (vi) enhancing conspicuity with lighting, signaling, and gesturing.

106 (b) "Dynamic driving task" does not include strategic functions such as trip scheduling  
107 and selection of destinations and waypoints.

108 [(12)] (13) "Engage" as it pertains to the operation of a vehicle by a driving automation  
109 system means to cause a driving automation system feature to perform part or all of the  
110 dynamic driving task on a sustained basis.

111 [(13)] (14) "External event" is a situation in the driving environment that necessitates a  
112 response by a human driver with a valid driver license or driving automation system.

113 [(14)] (15) "Fallback-ready user" means the user of a vehicle equipped with an engaged  
114 level three ADS who is:

115 (a) a human driver with a valid driver license; and

116 (b) ready to operate the vehicle if:

117 (i) a system failure occurs; or

118 (ii) the ADS issues a request to intervene.

119 [(15)] (16)(a) "Human driver" means a natural person who performs in real-time all or  
120 part of the dynamic driving task.

121 (b) "Human driver" includes a:

122 (i) conventional driver; and

123 (ii) remote driver.

124 [(16)] "~~Level five automated driving system" or "level five ADS" means an ADS feature~~  
125 ~~that has the capability to perform on a sustained basis the entire dynamic driving task~~  
126 ~~under all conditions that can reasonably be managed by a human driver, as well as any~~  
127 ~~maneuvers necessary to respond to a system failure, without any expectation that a~~  
128 ~~human user will respond to a request to intervene.]~~

129 [(17)] "~~Level four automated driving system" or "level four ADS" means an ADS feature~~  
130 ~~that, without any expectation that a human user will respond to a request to intervene,~~

- 131 has:]
- 132 [~~(a) the capability to perform on a sustained basis the entire dynamic driving task within~~
- 133 ~~its operational design domain; and]~~
- 134 [~~(b) the capability to perform any maneuvers necessary to achieve a minimal risk~~
- 135 ~~condition in response to:]~~
- 136 [~~(i) an exit from the operational design domain of the ADS; or]~~
- 137 [~~(ii) a system failure.]~~
- 138 [~~(18) "Level three automated driving system" or "level three ADS" means an ADS feature~~
- 139 ~~that:]~~
- 140 [~~(a) has the capability to perform on a sustained basis the entire dynamic driving task~~
- 141 ~~within its operational design domain; and]~~
- 142 [~~(b) requires a fallback-ready user to operate the vehicle after receiving a request to~~
- 143 ~~intervene or in response to a system failure.]~~
- 144 (17) "Level five ADS" means a level five automated driving system as defined in SAE
- 145 International Standard J3016 202104, "Taxonomy and Definitions for Terms Related to
- 146 Driving Automation Systems for On-Road Motor Vehicles," April 2021 edition, as
- 147 adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- 148 (18) "Level four ADS" means a level four automated driving system as defined in SAE
- 149 International Standard J3016 202104, "Taxonomy and Definitions for Terms Related to
- 150 Driving Automation Systems for On-Road Motor Vehicles," April 2021 edition, as
- 151 adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- 152 (19) "Level three ADS" means a level three automated driving system as defined in SAE
- 153 International Standard J3016 202104, "Taxonomy and Definitions for Terms Related to
- 154 Driving Automation Systems for On-Road Motor Vehicles," April 2021 edition, as
- 155 adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- 156 (20) "Level two DAS" means a level two driving automation system as defined in SAE
- 157 International Standard J3016 202104, "Taxonomy and Definitions for Terms Related to
- 158 Driving Automation Systems for On-Road Motor Vehicles," April 2021 edition, as
- 159 adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.
- 160 [~~(19)] (21) "Minimal risk condition" means a condition to which a user or an ADS may~~
- 161 ~~bring a motor vehicle in order to reduce the risk of a crash when a given trip cannot or~~
- 162 ~~should not be completed.~~
- 163 [~~(20)] (22) "Object and event detection and response" means the subtasks of the dynamic~~
- 164 ~~driving task that include:~~

- 165 (a) monitoring the driving environment; and
- 166 (b) executing an appropriate response in order to perform the dynamic driving task.
- 167 ~~[(21)]~~ (23) "On-demand autonomous vehicle network" means a transportation service
- 168 network that uses a software application or other digital means to dispatch or otherwise
- 169 enable the prearrangement of transportation with motor vehicles that have a level four or
- 170 five ADS in driverless operation for purposes of transporting persons, including for-hire
- 171 transportation and transportation for compensation.
- 172 ~~[(22)]~~ (24) "Operate" means the same as that term is defined in Section 41-1a-102.
- 173 ~~[(23)]~~ (25) "Operational design domain" means the operating conditions under which a
- 174 given ADS or feature thereof is specifically designed to function, including:
- 175 (a) speed range, environmental, geographical, and time-of-day restrictions; or
- 176 (b) the requisite presence or absence of certain traffic or roadway characteristics.
- 177 ~~[(24)]~~ (26) "Operator" means the same as that term is defined in Section 41-6a-102.
- 178 ~~[(25)]~~ (27) "Passenger" means a user on board a vehicle who has no role in the operation of
- 179 that vehicle.
- 180 ~~[(26)]~~ (28) "Person" means the same as that term is defined in Section 41-6a-102.
- 181 ~~[(27)]~~ (29) "Remote driver" means a human driver with a valid driver license who is not
- 182 located in a position to manually exercise in-vehicle braking, accelerating, steering, or
- 183 transmission gear selection input devices, but operates the vehicle.
- 184 ~~[(28)]~~ (30) "Request to intervene" means the notification by an ADS to a fallback-ready user
- 185 indicating that the fallback-ready user should promptly begin or resume operation of the
- 186 vehicle.
- 187 ~~[(29)]~~ (31) "Sustained operation of a motor vehicle" means the performance of part or all of
- 188 the dynamic driving task both between and across external events, including response to
- 189 external events and continued performance of part or all of the dynamic driving task in
- 190 the absence of external events.
- 191 ~~[(30)]~~ (32) "System failure" means a malfunction in a driving automation system or other
- 192 vehicle system that prevents the ADS from reliably performing the portion of the
- 193 dynamic driving task on a sustained basis, including the complete dynamic driving task[;
- 194 ~~that the ADS would otherwise perform].~~
- 195 ~~[(31)]~~ (33) "User" means a:
- 196 (a) human driver;
- 197 (b) passenger;
- 198 (c) fallback-ready user; or

199 (d) driverless operation dispatcher.

200 Section 3. Section **63I-2-217** is amended to read:

201 **63I-2-217 . Repeal dates: Titles 17 through 17D.**

202 (1) Subsection 17-79-804(4)(c), regarding an inspection fee on a qualified water  
203 conservancy district, is repealed July 1, 2026.

204 (2) Subsection 17-62-102(3), regarding the process for changing a form of county  
205 government, is repealed January 1, 2028.

206 (3) Subsections 17-62-203(10) through (12), regarding the process to create a districting  
207 commission and implementing a district map, are repealed July 1, 2029.

208 (4) Section 17B-2a-829, regarding a request for information on autonomous vehicles, is  
209 repealed July 1, 2027.

210 Section 4. Section **63I-2-272** is amended to read:

211 **63I-2-272 . Repeal dates: Title 72.**

212 (1) Subsection 72-1-213.1(13), regarding the road usage charge rate and road usage charge  
213 cap, is repealed January 1, 2033.

214 (2) Subsection 72-1-219, regarding a request for information with autonomous vehicles, is  
215 repealed July 1, 2028.

216 Section 5. Section **63N-3-1801** is enacted to read:

217 **63N-3-1801 . Autonomous Innovation Grant Program.**

218 (1) There is created the Autonomous Innovation Grant Program to be administered by the  
219 office.

220 (2)(a) Subject to availability of funds, the office may award a grant or an incentive to a  
221 private entity to support autonomous vehicle research, testing, deployment, and  
222 operations in the state.

223 (b) In addition to the items described in Subsection (2)(a), the office may award a grant  
224 to an entity for the purpose of building and operating electric vehicle charging  
225 infrastructure.

226 (3) The office shall:

227 (a) publicly advertise the availability of grants;

228 (b) solicit and evaluate proposals;

229 (c) consider projects that create economic opportunity, workforce development, and  
230 long-term industry presence in the state; and

231 (d) consider research and testing projects that support advanced air mobility, connected  
232 vehicle technology, and vehicle-to-vehicle communication to coordinate multiple

- 233            vehicles at once.
- 234    (4)(a) An entity that submits a proposal for a grant to the office shall include details in  
235    the proposal regarding:
- 236            (i) the entity's plan to use the grant to fulfill the purposes described in Subsection (2);  
237            and
- 238            (ii) any existing or planned partnerships between the entity and another person to  
239            implement the proposal.
- 240    (b) In evaluating a proposal for a grant, the office shall consider:
- 241            (i) the likelihood the proposal will accomplish the purposes described in Subsection  
242            (2);
- 243            (ii) the extent to which any additional funding sources or existing or planned  
244            partnerships will benefit the proposal; and
- 245            (iii) the viability and sustainability of the proposal.
- 246    (c) In determining a grant award, the office may consult with the GOEO board.
- 247    (5) Before receiving the grant, a grant recipient shall enter into a written agreement with the  
248    office that specifies:
- 249            (a) the grant amount;
- 250            (b) the time period and structure for distribution of the grant, including any terms and  
251            conditions the recipient is required to meet to receive a distribution; and
- 252            (c) the expenses for which the recipient may use the grant, including:
- 253            (i) acquisition of equipment;
- 254            (ii) production, design, construction, or engineering costs;
- 255            (iii) specialized employee training;
- 256            (iv) technology upgrades;
- 257            (v) utilities; or
- 258            (vi) provisions of a grant to another individual or entity for the expenses described in  
259            Subsections (5)(c)(i) through (v) or to otherwise fulfill the recipient's proposal.
- 260    (6)(a) If the office awards a grant to an entity for the purposes described in Subsection  
261    (2), the office shall consider projects that:
- 262            (i) include fast-charging stations, capable of delivering at least 350 kilowatts of  
263            direct-current charging per charging port;
- 264            (ii) are in a geographic area with fewer than 3 electric vehicle chargers within 100  
265            miles;
- 266            (iii) are in a geographic area where 250 kilowatt chargers are in limited quantities; or

- 267           (iv) are within 50 miles of a state or national park.
- 268           (b) In addition to the considerations described in Subsection (6)(a), the office shall  
269           consider projects that coordinate with the Department of Transportation in  
270           implementing the statewide electric vehicle charging network plan described in  
271           Section 72-1-216.
- 272           (7) Funding for a grant awarded under this section may originate as part of an existing or a  
273           newly created initiative.
- 274           (8) A recipient of a grant as described in this section is eligible to use technical assistance  
275           from the Utah Office of Regulatory Relief as described in Title 63N, Chapter 16, Utah  
276           Office of Regulatory Relief to:
- 277           (a) navigate regulatory requirements;  
278           (b) identify and resolve compliance barriers; and  
279           (c) coordinate with one or more state agencies involved in autonomous vehicle  
280           deployment.
- 281           (9) The office may, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative  
282           Rulemaking Act, make rules to create and administer the program.
- 283           Section 6. Section **72-1-219** is enacted to read:
- 284           **72-1-219 . Information for autonomous vehicles.**
- 285           (1) The department shall complete a request for information in accordance with Section  
286           63G-6a-409 to gather information regarding:
- 287           (a) large scale autonomous vehicle operation in the state; and  
288           (b) safety considerations with the operation of autonomous vehicles.
- 289           (2) The department shall coordinate the request for information with stakeholders the  
290           department determines are relevant.
- 291           (3) The request for information shall address:
- 292           (a) ways the state can encourage and facilitate the private sector to establish more  
293           autonomous vehicle services in the state in advance of the 2034 Olympic and  
294           Paralympic Winter Games;
- 295           (b) the potential of autonomous vehicle technology to positively impact the overall  
296           safety of traveling on state highways; and
- 297           (c) identification of barriers that are impeding or may potentially impede the  
298           establishment of autonomous vehicle services and business activities such as issues  
299           related to insurance and liability, vehicle registration and identification, and public  
300           safety.

301 (4) On or before November 30, 2027, the department shall report to the Transportation  
302 Interim Committee regarding the information gathered under this section.

303 Section 7. **Effective Date.**

304 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.