



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 949: Vehicle Laws - Fully Autonomous Vehicles

March 5th, 2025

Chair Smith and distinguished members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, it is my pleasure to come before you. My name is Greg Rogers. I serve on the State Policy Team at Waymo, and I am also a resident of Takoma Park, Maryland.

Today I'm offering testimony in favor of Senate Bill 949: Vehicle Laws - Fully Autonomous Vehicles. If enacted, this bill would authorize the use of autonomous vehicles on Maryland's roads.

Waymo is a fully autonomous driving technology company with a mission to be the world's most trusted driver. Today, we operate Waymo One, our fully autonomous ride-hailing service, in Phoenix, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Austin. We will also launch in Atlanta this year, and Miami in 2026.

With a few swipes on their phone, riders in these cities can hail a fully autonomous Waymo One ride – with no one behind the wheel – through an app on their phone. We provide more than 200,000 such trips to paying riders every week in these cities, and the Waymo Driver, the technology that powers it all, drives over one million miles on a weekly basis. To put that in perspective, it would take an average American driver 75 years to drive the mileage that the Waymo Driver does each week.

This amazing progress didn't happen overnight. Over the past 15 years, Waymo has worked tirelessly to develop and build the Waymo Driver to be the world's most experienced driver. We are incredibly proud of the safety record we have achieved.

Over 33 million miles of passenger operations, the data show the Waymo Driver is reducing the frequency and severity of collisions where we operate. Specifically, the Waymo Driver has lowered injury-causing crashes by 78% compared to humans driving the same distance. That percentage translates to 98 fewer injury-causing crashes compared to what the average human driver would experience in the same driving conditions, over the same number of miles. We make this data available online at [Waymo.com/safety](https://waymo.com/safety), and I encourage the committee to review this performance data and our safety research.

In the cities where Waymo operates, we've prioritized building a robust, useful service for residents and visitors alike. We are connecting people to where they want to go in multiple



major metros, and helping them access other parts of the existing transportation network to get them to their destination, including connecting to public transit. Tens of thousands of people across the country are using Waymo to go to the grocery store, to dinner, to doctor appointments, and even to the airport. In Arizona, we have partnered with Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, where Waymo currently provides curbside pickup just like any other ride share service, 24 hours a day.

Waymo was excited to bring our technology to the D.C. area last year for testing purposes. The Waymo Driver spent nearly four months driving throughout parts of the district including Downtown, NoMa, Capitol Hill, and the Southwest Waterfront with a human specialist behind the wheel. We are eager to expand that work into Maryland and work towards giving residents across the region a new, safe, and reliable means of transportation.

I also want to tell you about how Waymo operates.

Before beginning our testing in a new city, Waymo works closely with state departments of transportation, highway patrol, and local leaders, as well as their city and regional counterparts. After a period of testing, we start with initial service territories for select riders. The first group is often Waymo employees, followed by a slow-and-steady introduction of members of the public. As we expand in any city, we thoughtfully scale our operations in coordination with our local partners.

Our mission is to be the world's most trusted driver and we take public safety very seriously. We have a team of former first responders and safety officials who work with emergency personnel of all kinds to train and inform them on the technology prior to and during ongoing operations. In fact, we have trained more than 15,000 first responders across the country. Waymo vehicles encounter hundreds of emergency vehicles on the roads where we operate every day, and can safely respond to their instructions.

Today, twenty-five states have enacted bills similar to SB 949, which is necessary before companies like Waymo can operate in any state. I hope that my testimony as well as testimony you will hear from others will shed light on the critical safety and accessibility benefits that AVs are providing today and can bring to our state. Nearly 43,000 traffic-related deaths happen on U.S. roads every year, and as of last week, 50 people have already died in traffic collisions in Maryland this year. We strongly believe Waymo's autonomous driving technology can make roads safer, and mobility more accessible.



On behalf of Waymo, I would like to thank Senator Love for her interest in this topic, and the innovative team at the Motor Vehicle Administration for their years of thoughtful leadership in this area.

I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 949.

Thank you