



1410 Bush Street (Suite A)
Baltimore, MD 21230
Phone: 410-547-1515
Email: info@afscmemd.org

Patrick Moran – President

SB 909/HB 1295 – Vehicle Laws – Fully Autonomous Vehicles

**Judicial Proceedings Committee
March 4, 2026**

**Environment and Transportation Committee
March 5, 2026**

Position: UNFAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 represents 55,000 public servants across Maryland's state and local agencies, public schools, and higher education institutions. Our membership includes thousands of highly skilled CDL drivers who safely transport our students to public schools each day and across our university campuses, and they operate heavy equipment across our state, county, and toll roads. We want to both protect these vital jobs and the safety of the Marylanders our members serve.

Lack of Labor Inclusion

As drafted, SB 909/HB 1295 ignores the voices of organized labor. Unlike other states where labor organizations have partnered with legislatures to shepherd in new technology safely, this bill was crafted in a vacuum. During the [January 29, 2026, briefing](#), MVA Administrator Christine Nizer admitted that despite autonomous vehicle (AV) testing occurring in Maryland since mid-2017, labor has never been brought to the table. We cannot support a framework that excludes the very workers most impacted by its implementation.

Proven Safety Risks

Maryland must not rush into an AV expansion while the technology remains unreliable in critical safety scenarios. Recent data suggests these vehicles struggle with basic traffic safety:

- **School Bus Safety:** In January 2026, the [NTSB opened an investigation into Waymo vehicles in Austin, Texas](#), for failing to stop for school buses loading and unloading children.

- **Emergency Response Interference:** In late 2025 and 2023, driverless vehicles from [Waymo](#) and [GM Cruise](#) repeatedly breached active fire scenes in Los Angeles and San Francisco, obstructed first responders, and, in one instance, required firefighters to smash a window to stop the vehicle.
- **Unreported Collisions:** [Tesla's](#) robotaxi service in Austin reported three collisions, including one injury, within its first month of deployment.

AFSCME, along with other Labor partners nationally, are for instance involved in with legislative efforts in [Missouri](#) and [Washington State](#) at the moment to regulate the use of AVs. Here in Maryland, AFSCME Council 3 also supports a strong minimum state safety standard for AVs, provided it includes policy measures to prevent worker displacement and robust workforce development. However, any legislation with this level of impact on the workforce must move forward with the deep involvement of organized labor not just the input of a single industry.

For these reasons, AFSCME Council 3 urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 909/HB 1295.

