



March 2, 2026

House Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

## **SUPPORT IF AMENDED: HB1295 - Vehicle Laws - Fully Autonomous Vehicles**

Bikemore, Baltimore City's livable streets advocacy organization and the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, a transportation advocacy organization with an agenda to improve and expand transportation options for the residents and businesses of Central Maryland, are writing to **support HB1295 if amended.**

Fully autonomous vehicles are coming. We recognize that. We also recognize the opportunity they can potentially bring—if well regulated—to enhancing safety for all road users, particularly vulnerable road users. In Baltimore City, we have two examples of new transportation technologies and regulation around them.

**Our shared micromobility program is subject to local enabling legislation, oversight, and permitting.** As a result, the Baltimore City Department of Transportation receives total transparency into the impact of shared micromobility on our transportation network. Secure, anonymized data is shared to a third party data host, allowing both the public and transportation professionals to mitigate the negative impacts of the program and highlight the benefits. Worker protections, equity in pricing and deployment policies, and required community engagement are baked into permits. **This program produces 4 million trips per year and is nationally recognized as a model to replicate.**

**Our TNCs are regulated only by the state.** The Baltimore City Department of Transportation has no insight into their impact on our transportation network. We gain no valuable data through these trips to learn travel patterns and trends and adapt our streets to accommodate them. Workers are abused. Drivers can avoid serving certain neighborhoods. **We are left with only measurable negative externalities.**

As drafted, this legislation would enable another version of the second model. In doing so, legislators would be saying that 25-pound bikes and scooters need more local, context-driven regulation than 5,000-pound driverless cars.

**Baltimore City must have the ability to locally regulate and permit commercial autonomous vehicle operations.** This could be accommodated with the following change to the legislation:

21-1506. A STATE AGENCY OR LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISION MAY **NOT** PROHIBIT THE OPERATION OF FULLY AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES ON HIGHWAYS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE STATE AGENCY OR LOCAL POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OR OTHERWISE ENACT OR KEEP IN

EFFECT RULES OR ORDINANCES THAT WOULD IMPOSE TAXES, FEES, OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIC TO THE OPERATION OF FULLY AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES.

If there are concerns that this is too broad, the committee should introduce an amendment that clarifies that *commercial* autonomous vehicle operations are subject to local permitting, taxes, and fees.

Please consider the positive impacts local permitting and regulation have had on new transportation technologies in Baltimore City, and to give this potentially promising new addition to mobility in our city the same local oversight so it has the best chance for success.

We encourage you to support HB1295 favorably only with the above-suggested amendment.

Sincerely,

Jed Weeks  
Bikemore

Brian O'Malley  
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance