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TEAMSTERS

LOCAL 639

Affiliated With The International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Representing members in the following industries;
Drivers, Chauffeurs and Helpers, Dairy Delivery and Plant
Processing, Law Enforcement, Public Employees, Bakery,

Laundry and Allied Sales Drivers, Health Care Workers,
Housekeeping and Laundry Aides, Gaming Industry and
Casino Employees, Washington, D.C. and Metropolitan
Area

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

March 5, 2026

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

I write to you today on behalf of the more than 9,500 members of Teamsters Local 639 in order to express our deeply held concerns with House Bill 1295.

The members of Local 639 drive every classification of vehicle on the public roads of Maryland; from our tractor-trailer drivers at UPS and Giant Foods, to paratransit operators with WMATA's MetroAccess program, our members deliver long awaited packages, keep the shelves of our stores fully stocked, and make our community more connected and accessible for everyone. Our members have dedicated years of their lives obtaining proper licensing and extensive training that keeps themselves and the motoring public safe on our roadways.

Let me be clear - the Teamsters do not oppose technology that would make our roads safer. Over the years, our drivers have trained and adapted to work in vehicles equipped with electronic logging devices, speed limiters, automatic emergency brakes, and more. However, this legislation is written in such a way that any and all autonomous vehicles would be given the green light to operate on our roads, even if they have not yet proven that that they can be safely driven. As written, House Bill 1295 would allow any vehicle, of any size, to be operated without a driver. We need to ask ourselves - do we really believe that this technology is at a point where we can trust it to drive vehicles weighing as much as 80,000lbs on the roads next to our families? Do we really believe that there should not be a restriction on the transportation of hazardous materials? Any commercial truck driver can tell you about the enormous risks that come with operating a vehicle of that size and weight.

The legislation refers to the availability of a “fleet support specialist” who is supposed to assist with a vehicle in case of emergency – should we not have a requirement that this individual should be physically based in the state of Maryland, properly licensed to drive in our state, and familiar with our roadways? Recent testimony provided by the autonomous vehicle company Waymo in the United States Senate indicates that much of their technical support staff is based out of the country.

Our members are experts in their crafts and know just how much skill it takes in order operate their vehicles in a manner that is safe for themselves, other motorists, and pedestrians who use our public roadways. Until these critical stakeholders are properly engaged in discussions about the future operations of vehicles on our roads, we respectfully urge you to oppose House Bill 1295.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

William Davis

President, Teamsters Local 639