

# Autonomy On Hold: Nevada Senate Bill SB395 Seeks to Hit the Brakes on Fully Driverless Vehicles

Article By:

Joseph L. Benson II

Ben J. Bingham

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Nevada has long been at the forefront of autonomous vehicle (AV) technology, with the state boldly moving toward fully driverless cars as a normal part of its infrastructure. However, as AV technology continues to advance and increase the number of vehicles on its roads, public policy, regulatory, and safety concerns have come into play. Senate Bill 395 (SB395), introduced in the 2025 legislative session, seeks to correct these issues by modifying major provisions for the operation of autonomous vehicles in Nevada.

SB395 will change the operation of autonomous vehicles from state to state. At present, completely autonomous vehicles may be driven without a human driver present, provided certain conditions are satisfied. SB395 would, however, regulate these autonomous cars by placing further operating restrictions on them and altering the need for human presence to drive them. This is primarily due to the growing concern about AV safety and preparedness to support advanced real-world driving conditions.

## Key Provisions of SB395:

1. **Human Operator Requirements** - The most significant alteration in SB395 is the need for a human operator to be on board in fully autonomous vehicles—at least in the short run—until the technology is proven to be completely safe and reliable. This requirement is intended to provide an immediate human intervention in the event of unforeseen circumstances or system failure.
2. **Increased Safety Standards** - The legislation demands increased safety standards in autonomous vehicles, such as the creation of new testing procedures to assess the actions of cars in challenging driving circumstances, and enhanced manufacturer standards to prove their vehicles can navigate all kinds of road conditions in a safe and secure manner.
3. **Insurance and Liability Adjustments** - SB395 would also mandate car manufacturers to maintain certain types of insurance to protect against the risk of damages caused by AV-related accidents. This could include greater liability coverage because self-driving cars bring about new risks.
4. **Data and Reporting Mandates** - The bill would demand more data gathering and reporting

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requirements on autonomous car manufacturers. This would allow regulators in the state to track the performance and safety record of AVs, ensuring that the technology is responsibly developed.

## Potential Benefits of SB395:

- **Enhanced Safety:** By requiring the presence of human drivers and imposing stricter safety regulations, SB395 could also end accidents caused by technical malfunctions or unforeseen incidents. The bill addresses the problems caused by accidents in which AVs have not functioned as they ought to during emergency situations where a safety device is most needed to protect the public.
- **Public Trust in Autonomous Vehicles:** While driverless vehicles are said to revolutionize transportation, most of the public is suspicious of their safety. By establishing SB395 into law, the Nevada legislature believes it will build trust with AV technology through the implementation of human oversight and other safeguards.
- **Long-term Industry Growth:** Through the enactment of legislation that allows for the phased introduction of fully autonomous vehicles, SB395 provides a pathway for the AV industry to grow in a sustainable and managed manner. The bill ensures that autonomous vehicles can be tested and deployed safely while also encouraging innovation within the industry.

## Challenges and Potential Drawbacks:

- **Impact on Industry** - Nevada has led the way in regulating autonomous vehicle testing, and some argue that imposing further limitations would weaken the state's proactive stance. Further human oversight and rigorous regulation could stifle the growth of autonomous vehicles, making them slower.
- **Economic and Operating Costs** - Deployment of SB395 would also bring added costs for operators and manufacturers, who would be forced to pay more for additional tests, insurance, and meeting new regulations. These charges can be levied on the masses, thus slowing down the universal deployment of autonomous cars.

## Looking Ahead: The Future of Autonomous Vehicles in Nevada

As autonomous vehicle technology continues to develop, Nevada's role as a testing ground for AVs remains significant. SB395 is a major move toward balancing the potential of innovation with the need for public safety and regulatory oversight. While it may slow the roll-out of fully autonomous vehicles, it sets the stage for an era where autonomous vehicles can integrate into society more safely and responsibly.

As autonomous vehicle laws continue to evolve, working with a knowledgeable [car accident lawyer](#) can help individuals understand how new regulations like SB395 might impact accident liability and insurance issues.

The result of SB395 will have implications far beyond Nevada, establishing a precedent for other states contemplating similar legislation for self-driving cars. It will also affect manufacturers' strategy regarding safety, insurance, and the introduction of fully autonomous technology in the next few years.

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## Endnotes:

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