



Autonomous Vehicle Authorization

February 2026

Currently, the Governor’s budget proposes to empower the DMV to license and regulate for-hire Autonomous Vehicle (AV) to operate in New York State outside of NYC. The undersigned organizations encourage the legislature to act with caution and ensure the following nuances are clearly addressed:

- 1. Allow municipalities a say in managing their streets:** The Governor’s proposal requires a demonstration of local support as defined by the commissioner of the DMV. The NYS legislature should define public support to be in the form of a municipal resolution by the local governmental body (Town Board, Village Board, County Legislature, City Council) and these bodies should be explicitly allowed to create incentive zones, exclusion zones, and other regulations tailored to local needs to address transit deserts, congestion, and other specific local issues.
- 2. Transparent data collection & public release:** The NYS Legislature should require that metrics including but not limited to disengagements, traffic violations, mileage, incidents involving vulnerable road users, all crashes, and video of crashes should be reported to New York State and posted publicly. Transparency will allow lawmakers, advocates, and academics the opportunity to evaluate the AV pilot program and build trust with the public.
- 3. Time-limited process which requires reauthorization:** We support the NYS Legislature requiring a licensing and reauthorization process which evaluates safety traffic control, traffic enforcement, the local workforce, and emergency services.
- 4. AV operators must be held accountable:** Law enforcement must be able to issue tickets to AVs which violate vehicle and traffic laws. The Governor’s proposal says vehicles must remain compliant with traffic law but does not provide a framework to incentivise safe operation.

5. **Remote operator oversight:** The NYS Legislature should require that remote AV operators working with vehicles driving on New York’s roadways have a driver’s licence valid in New York State. Companies should be required to disclose training procedures and regulators should establish specific requirements to ensure operators have enough remote operators to respond to their fleet in an emergency.

New York should learn from municipalities across the country, and address these issues proactively:

- A scaled AV deployment could nearly [double vehicle miles traveled](#), [reduce transit ridership by three quarters](#), and hinder emergency response operations.
- San Francisco has seen a number of dangerous and illegal behaviors by Waymo vehicles including stopping in [bus](#) and [bike lanes](#), [making illegal u-turns](#), and recently, the entire fleet [stopped working](#) while on the road during a blackout (12/25).
- In Atlanta, local police officials have [complained](#) that there is no process for citing AVs for behaviors that warrant a citation for a human driver(5/25).
- In Austin, Waymo vehicles have [repeatedly failed](#) to stop for school buses, putting children in danger (12/25).
- In Santa Monica, like in the majority of localities, local officials have officially stated that their [hands are completely tied](#) to response to resident requests for policy fixes (6/25).

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