

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember Mary M. Cheh introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on _____.

To authorize autonomous vehicles to operate on the roadways of the District, to establish a system of user taxation for autonomous vehicles based upon vehicle miles traveled, to require the Department of Motor Vehicles to create an autonomous vehicle designation; and to establish safe operating protocols for such vehicles.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the "Autonomous Vehicle Act of 2012".

Sec. 2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this act, the term:

(1) "Alternative Fuel" means fuels defined as alternative fuels by the Energy Policy Act of 1992, approved October 24, 1992 (106 Stat. 2866; 42 U.S.C. § 13211(2)).

(2) "Autonomous Vehicle" means a vehicle capable of navigating the roadways of the District and interpreting all existing traffic control devices without a driver operating any of the vehicle's control systems.

(3) "Driver" means a human operator of a motor vehicle with a valid driver's license.

(4) "Public roadway" means any street, road, or public thoroughfare.

Sec. 3. Autonomous vehicles permitted.

1 (a) An autonomous vehicle may operate on a public roadway in the District; provided,
2 that the vehicle:

3 (1) Operates without a driver actively manning the controls on public roadways;

4 (2) Has a manual override feature that allows a driver to assume control of the
5 autonomous vehicle at any time;

6 (3) Has a driver seated in the control seat of the vehicle while in operation who
7 shall be prepared to take control of the autonomous vehicle at any moment;

8 (4) Obeys all traffic laws; and

9 (5) Operates on alternative fuels.

10 (b) Pursuant to Title 1 of the District of Columbia Administrative Procedure Act,
11 approved October 21, 1968 (82 Stat. 1204; D.C. Official Code § 2-501 *et seq.*), the Mayor shall
12 issue rules establishing a class of vehicles for autonomous vehicles and procedures and fees for
13 the registration, titling, and issuance of permits to operate autonomous vehicles.

14 Sec. 4. Taxation of autonomous vehicles.

15 (a) Autonomous vehicles shall be exempt from the motor fuel tax established in D.C.
16 Official Code § 47-2301.

17 (b) Owners of autonomous vehicles shall pay a vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) fee of
18 1.875 cents per mile.

19 (1) The Mayor shall establish a system for collecting VMT fees.

20 (2) The VMT fee shall be tabulated using an autonomous vehicle's telemetry
21 systems.

22 (c) The proceeds of the VMT fee imposed under subsection (b) of this section, and the
23 money collected from fees charged for the registration and titling of autonomous vehicles,

1 including fees charged for the issuance of permits to operate autonomous vehicles, shall be
2 deposited in the General Fund of the District of Columbia established under D.C. Official Code §
3 47-131.

4 (d) The Chief Financial Officer of the District shall transfer annually to the District of
5 Columbia Highway Trust Fund the proceeds of the fees imposed under subsection (b) of this
6 section.

7 Sec. 5. Fiscal impact statement.

8 (a) The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
9 impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act,
10 approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

11 Sec. 6. Effective date.

12 (a) This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by
13 the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review
14 as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
15 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02 (c)(1)), and publication in the District of
16 Columbia Register.