

12. Adopt Resolution supporting Senate Bill (SB) 915 (Cortese), “The Autonomous Vehicle Service Deployment and Data Transparency Act,” and directing the County Executive to send a letter to the members of the County’s Legislative Delegation expressing support for the bill and to include SB 915 in the County’s 2024 Legislative Policies. (Lee/Arenas) (ID# 24-5403) Resolution No. BOS-2024-41



## SENATOR DAVE CORTESE

# ***SB 915: The Autonomous Vehicle Service Deployment and Data Transparency Act***

### **SUMMARY**

Right now, robotaxis and other autonomous vehicle services are operating in California communities without input from local government, concerned residents, emergency responders, or workers.

### **BACKGROUND**

In California, only the Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) authorize and govern autonomous vehicle services, not local governments.

Over the last year, driverless vehicles have delayed transport and medical care, blocked emergency vehicles, and interfered during active firefighting and crime scenes. First responders have been forced to relocate their emergency vehicles because of wayward autonomous vehicles.

These events have sparked a backlash in San Francisco in recent months following a series of traffic snarls and accidents. In one incident, a pedestrian was run over and dragged by a Cruise vehicle after she was struck by another car. Although this resulted in the suspension of Cruise's deployment permit, the DMV only took disciplinary action after it became clear that Cruise misled California regulators about the severity of the event.

The San Francisco Fire Department has indicated that more than 70 driverless vehicles have interfered with emergency responders in 2023 alone.

Additionally, many communities have expressed concerns over the number of driverless vehicles allowed to operate on their local streets; hours allowed for service/operation; locations of vulnerable populations (e.g. schoolyards); and damage to local streets and roads with heavier than average displacement.

Unlike the process for regulating taxicabs, local government are not authorized to establish rules and regulations around the deployment of autonomous vehicle services.

### **THIS BILL**

SB 915 would prioritize local control in the decision to deploy autonomous vehicle services. Contingent upon an autonomous vehicle service company receiving approval by the DMV and the CPUC, this bill would prevent deployment in a geographic location until a local government passes an ordinance authorizing operations.

Each city, county, or city and county that adopts an ordinance or resolution shall include, at a minimum, a policy for entry into the business of providing autonomous vehicle services. This policy must include and consider:

- Maximum rates for passenger fares (robotaxi)
- Establishment of vehicle caps
- Establishment of data transparency
- Establishment of interoperability for emergency responders
- A process of ensuring ADA accessibility
- Annual inspections for health and safety

By doing so, SB 915 will go a long way towards repairing the flawed approach that governs the deployment of robotaxis and similar services in California.

### **SUPPORT**

California Teamsters Public Affairs Council (co-sponsor)  
California Conference Board of the Amalgamated Transit Union (co-sponsor)  
California League of Cities (co-sponsor)  
California Labor Federation

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Evan Fern  
Office of Senator Dave Cortese  
(916) 651-4015  
[Evan.Fern@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Evan.Fern@sen.ca.gov)



RESOLUTION NO. BOS-2024-41

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY  
OF SANTA CLARA SUPPORTING SENATE BILL 915 (CORTESE),  
“THE AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE SERVICE DEPLOYMENT AND DATA  
TRANSPARENCY ACT”**

**WHEREAS**, on January 9, 2024, Senator Dave Cortese introduced Senate Bill 915 which prioritizes local control in deployment of autonomous vehicle services by preventing deployment in a geographic location until a local government passes an ordinance authorizing operations;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 would empower local communities, maintain safety for pedestrians, passengers, and other vehicles, and establish a community-centered approach;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 would provide local governments with the authority to determine if and how self-driving vehicles operate in a given area through the enactment of local ordinances;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 would allow each local government to set up its own rules for self-driving vehicle services based on the community's unique needs, including rules governing fares on robotaxis, as well as caps on the number of autonomous service vehicles on the road, thus managing traffic and reducing the potential for injuries;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 has the support of the California Teamsters Public Affairs Council, California Conference Board of the Amalgamated, Transit Union, California League of Cities, and California Labor Federation;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 would require any policy adopted by a city, county, or city and county to include and consider: disclosure of rates for passenger fares (robotaxi), establishment of vehicle caps and hours of service, establishment of data transparency, establishment of interoperability for emergency responders, a process of ensuring ADA accessibility, and annual inspections for safety;

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 allows each city, county, or city and county to adopt policies that address the unique traffic safety considerations for its community such as, but not limited to, topography, road conditions, public transit interchanges, intersection accident data, safe routes to schools, limited access first responder emergency routes, and natural hazard evacuation routes, all of which may be adversely affected by system malfunction or failure; and,

**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill 915 will go a long way towards repairing the flawed and deficient one-size-fits-all legal framework that currently governs the deployment of robotaxis and similar services in California.

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**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara, State of California, supports Senate Bill 915, "The Autonomous Vehicle Service Deployment and Data Transparency Act", authored by Senator Dave Cortese (D-San Jose).

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors directs the County Executive to send a letter to the members of the County's Legislative Delegation expressing support for the bill and include SB 915 in the County's 2024 Legislative Policies.

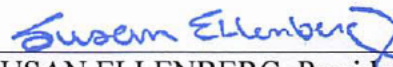
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Clara, State of California, on APR 16 2024 by the following vote:

AYES: ARENAS, CHAVEZ, ELLENBERG  
LEE, SIMITIAN

NOES: NONE


ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

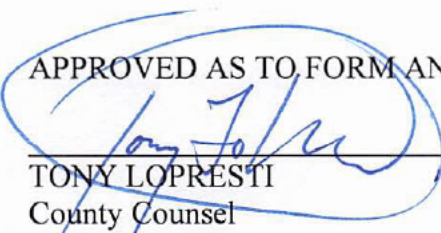
  
SUSAN ELLENBERG, President  
Board of Supervisors

Signed and certified that a copy of this document has been delivered by electronic or other means to the President, Board of Supervisors.

ATTEST:

  
CURTIS BOONE  
Acting Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

  
TONY LOPRESTI  
County Counsel

County of Santa Clara  
Supervisory District Three



24-5403

**DATE:** April 16, 2024  
**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Otto Lee, Supervisor  
Sylvia Arenas, Supervisor  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution in support of Senate Bill 915

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Adopt Resolution supporting Senate Bill (SB) 915 (Cortese), “The Autonomous Vehicle Service Deployment and Data Transparency Act,” and directing the County Executive to send a letter to the members of the County’s Legislative Delegation expressing support for the bill and to include SB 915 in the County’s 2024 Legislative Policies. (Lee/Arenas)

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Over the last year, driverless vehicles have delayed transport and medical care, blocked emergency vehicles, and interfered during active firefighting and crime scenes. First responders have been forced to relocate their emergency vehicles because of wayward autonomous vehicles. The San Francisco Fire Department has indicated that more than 70 driverless vehicles have interfered with emergency responders in 2023 alone.

Currently, local governments have no authority to establish rules or regulations related to the deployment of autonomous vehicles. Unlike the process for regulating taxicabs, local governments cannot establish rules and regulations around the deployment of autonomous vehicle services. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) administers the Autonomous Vehicles and authorizes permits to manufacturers that test and deploy autonomous vehicles. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) serves as the regulatory body for for-hire transportation services such as taxi cabs and rideshare.

In 2023, the CPUC approved permits for Cruise and Waymo to charge fares for passenger services without a human driver present in San Francisco. Earlier this year, Waymo submitted an application to the CPUC to expand its driverless taxi service to San Mateo County and parts of Santa Clara County, including Palo Alto, Mountain View and Sunnyvale. The DMV gave Waymo approval to operate on highways and city streets from San Francisco to Sunnyvale.

SB 915 would prioritize local control in the decision to deploy autonomous vehicle services. Contingent upon an autonomous vehicle service company receiving approval by the DMV and the CPUC, this bill would prevent deployment in a geographic location until a local government passes an ordinance authorizing operations. The bill is patterned after existing law that provides for local regulation of taxicab companies which requires taxicab companies to have a valid permit to operate in a local jurisdiction. It will help maintain safety for pedestrians, passengers, and other vehicles, while also establishing a community-centered approach.

## **BACKGROUND**

After several collisions involving Cruise vehicles, including one incident in which a Cruise self-driving taxi drove over a pedestrian and pinned them under a car, the DMV suspended their permits, effectively halting their operations completely in California. The DMV noted that it had suspended Cruise's autonomous vehicle deployment and driverless testing permits on the basis that its vehicles were unsafe for public operation and that the manufacturer had misrepresented the safety of its cars.

Last December, the City and County of San Francisco filed a lawsuit against the State of California for "unlawful" authorization of self-driving cars demanding the CPUC reconsider its decision to allow autonomous vehicles to operate 24/7 as paid taxi service.

The counties of Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Mateo and the cities of Oakland and Los Angeles have all adopted similar resolutions in support of SB 915.

The bill is supported by the California Conference Board of The Amalgamated Transit Union, the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, California Professional Firefighters, California Teamsters Public Affairs Council, AFSCME CA, and the California School Employees Association, among others.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Resolution Supporting Senate Bill 915



## REQUEST TO SPEAK FORM

This document is a public record, subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

This document may also be added to the meeting materials posted on the County website.

If you wish to address the Board, Committee, or Commission, please fill out this form and place it in the container provided.

DATE: 4.16.24

AGENDA ITEM NO. ~~7~~ 12

For Issue ☒

Against Issue ☐

Neutral ☐

\* Written comments for the record only ☐

NAME (OPTIONAL): ROBERT SANDOVAL Decline to State ☐

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ORGANIZATION (OPTIONAL): TEAMSTERS LOCAL 350

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

\*If you want to provide written comments for the record only, and you do NOT wish to address the Board, Committee, or Commission orally, please write comments below:

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DATE: 4/10/24

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

For Issue ☒

Against Issue ☐

Neutral ☐

\* Written comments for the record only ☐

NAME (OPTIONAL): Sergio Arvanaga Decline to State ☐

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ORGANIZATION (OPTIONAL): Teamsters Local 350

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

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DATE: 4-16-24

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 12

For Issue ☐

Against Issue ☐

Neutral ☐

\* Written comments for the record only ☐

NAME (OPTIONAL): Luis Meza Decline to State ☐

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ORGANIZATION (OPTIONAL): Teamsters Local 350

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

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DATE: 4-16-24

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

For Issue ☒ Against Issue ☐ Neutral ☐ \* Written comments for the record only ☐

NAME (OPTIONAL): Joey Gomes Decline to State ☐  
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ORGANIZATION (OPTIONAL): Teamsters 350  
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_  
PLEASE PRINT

\*If you want to provide written comments for the record only, and you do NOT wish to address the Board, Committee, or Commission orally, please write comments below:

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DATE: 4-16-24

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 12

For Issue ☒

Against Issue ☐

Neutral ☐

\* Written comments for the record only ☐

NAME (OPTIONAL): JOHN APODACA Decline to State ☐

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ORGANIZATION (OPTIONAL): Teamsters Local 350

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

\*If you want to provide written comments for the record only, and you do NOT wish to address the Board, Committee, or Commission orally, please write comments below:

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