



## Driverless Car Technology Requires Responsibility

### OPPOSE HB 311 by Rep. Fischer & SB 932 by Sen. Brandes

Self-driving cars hold incredible promise. But today, the technology remains very much in the experimental phase. There will be missteps and mistakes in the years—and possibly decades—to come before fully autonomous cars are ready for mass deployment. Unleashing this experimental technology on Florida’s roadways will subject Floridians and our millions of guests to the risk of being maimed, paralyzed, or killed by a beta-test car. If we are going to allow this type of experimentation, then there must also be clear accountability and financial responsibility rules. **When no one is accountable, no one is safe.**

As presently drafted, HB 311 and SB 932 would allow anyone (an undergraduate FSU student, a Chinese company, or an underfunded startup) to test whatever “autonomous technology” they want on our roads. The bills would also deem the “autonomous technology,” rather than the owner, to be the “driver.” But the bills say nothing about who is accountable when that technology fails and paralyzes a Floridian. Who should pay for the medical bills? The family? Florida’s taxpayers via social benefits programs? Or the owner and manufacturer who chose to use our state’s roads as a beta-testing ground?

To ensure all Floridians are safe, any legislation dealing with AVs should include this minimum set of safety standards:

- **The manufacturer and the owner must be responsible.** As drafted, these bills make the automated driving system—not the owner or manufacturer—the operator. They would make a bag of bolts and some sand legally responsible for reckless driving or vehicular homicide. Companies selling or deploying automated vehicles should vouch for the ability of that vehicle to comply with the rules of the road whenever the automated system is engaged. Similarly, just as with conventional vehicles, owners should be expected to maintain responsibility for their own vehicles.
- **Mandated Financial Responsibility.** Collisions caused by automated driving are inevitable, but what is not inevitable is that those responsible will be adequately insured. These bills do not address insurance requirements at all, though they do include allowances for automated vehicles to be driven by individuals, used for ridesharing, and tested on Florida roads. In each of these situations, the companies operating these services and owners purchasing these vehicles should be adequately insured to cover the full cost of the harm they cause. The costs of a collision with an automated vehicle should not fall on the innocent party.
- **A framework for investigating crashes.** Evidence should be preserved and available to law enforcement and private litigants. These bills do not address data collection, storage, or sharing requirements. Similarly, the bills should require not only that vehicles be capable of reporting incidents, but it should address requirements to *actually* report crashes. Further, the bills should address special registration requirements for manufacturers and testers of AVs on Florida roads. These tools would allow both law enforcement and private crash victims to create a full picture of responsibility after any collisions.

**Legislators should remain committed to putting common sense protections in place to ensure the safety of this exciting innovative technology on our roadways. For this reason,  
Vote NO on HB 311 and SB 932**