



May 11, 2026

Senator Lisa Cutter
200 E Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Matt Ball
200 E Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chair Cutter, Vice-Chair Ball, and members of the Senate Transportation and Energy Committee,

The Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association (“AVIA”) writes to express our significant concerns with and strong opposition to HB 26-1286. By requiring a human observer to be present in commercial motor vehicles (“CMVs”) equipped with an automated driving system, the bill would impede the ability of autonomous vehicle (“AV”) operators to bring the many benefits of AV technology to Colorado. We respectfully encourage the Committee to vote against HB 26-1286.

As background, AVIA represents the world’s leading technology, ridesharing, trucking, and automotive companies. Our mission is to realize the benefits of AVs and support the safe and expeditious deployment of these technologies. Vehicles operated by AVs have driven more than [145 million autonomous miles](#) on public roads in the U.S. alone and have a tremendous safety record that is supported by data collected by the federal government.

HB 26-1286 Would Effectively Ban Autonomous Trucks in Colorado

For many years, Colorado has supported AV deployment under a statutory framework authorizing the operation of AVs. As AV operations expand across the country, this framework has positioned Colorado to attract the many safety, mobility, and economic benefits of AVs.

HB 26-1286 would reverse that progress. By requiring a human observer in ADS-equipped CMVs, the bill would effectively prohibit autonomous trucking operations in Colorado. Autonomous trucks are safely operating without human drivers across the country. Imposing a human-observer mandate would forestall AV investment, development, and operations in the state, sending a signal that Colorado is closed to innovation and life-saving transportation technologies.

A majority of states, including Colorado, recognize the many benefits of AVs and authorize driverless AV operations, including autonomous trucks. No state that authorizes AV deployment



requires a human observer to remain in the vehicle, and Colorado should not adopt policies that isolate it from national progress. If Colorado were to move forward with this policy, it would become a national outlier—discouraging companies from testing, deploying, and investing in the state.

Autonomous Trucks Support Road Safety

Autonomous trucks are safely operating across the country. Rather than increase barriers to AV deployment, Colorado should support AV operation precisely because AVs remove human error from the equation.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that approximately [40,000 traffic deaths](#) occur annually in the United States—over 100 fatalities per day—overwhelmingly caused by human error. Unlike human drivers, AVs do not drive impaired, text while driving, fall asleep at the wheel, or recklessly speed. Moreover, AVs have built a significant safety record through more than a dozen years of development and deployment, and AVs are safely operating without a human driver in states across the country. This safety record is supported by data collected by the federal government, which requires AV companies to report crashes—regardless of who caused the crash—that occur while an automated driving system is engaged.

Autonomous Trucks Help Address Supply Chain and Workforce Challenges

Autonomous trucks can help mitigate supply chain challenges and augment the existing truck driver workforce. U.S. freight volume is projected to increase dramatically in the coming decades, with federal government data [showing](#) that our country must move 50% more freight by 2050. At the same time, the trucking industry faces a persistent and worsening driver shortage. The U.S. trucking industry is [short](#) of an estimated 78,000 truck drivers, and this shortage is estimated to double by 2031. Colorado must find ways to move more freight efficiently and safely. Autonomous trucks are one part of the suite of solutions and that autonomous trucks will augment the important work that truck drivers do for our country.

The AV industry is leveraging the existing workforce to create new roles across a range of education and skill levels, including service technicians, remote assistance operators, mapping data specialists, and logistics support personnel. Workers with experience in the trucking industry offer valuable skills to AV trucking employers.

According to a [study](#) funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, automating long-haul trucking will spur \$111 billion in aggregate investment spending across the U.S. economy, increase total U.S. employment by 26,400 to 35,100 jobs per



year on average, and raise annual earnings for all U.S. workers by more than \$200 per worker per year.

Autonomous vehicles will usher in a new era of mobility that can make Colorado's transportation system safer, more efficient, and more economically competitive. Colorado has been a leader in supporting innovation while prioritizing safety. HB 26-1286 would reverse that progress, isolate Colorado from national AV policy trends, and establish a troubling precedent for technology regulation.

For the reasons described above, we respectfully urge the Committee to vote no on HB 26-1286.

Sincerely,

Jeff Farrah
Chief Executive Officer
Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association