

March 15, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Tanner
Chairman
House Transportation Committee
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: SENATE BILL 219 – RELATING TO AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Dear Representative Tanner:

Global Automakers, www.globalautomakers.org, represents the U.S. operations of international motor vehicle manufacturers, original equipment suppliers, and other automotive-related trade associations. We work with industry leaders, legislators, regulators, and other stakeholders in the United States. Our goal is to create public policy that improves motor vehicle safety, encourages technological innovation and protects our planet. **Our members employ nearly 5,000 people at 17 facilities, including two manufacturing facilities, in Georgia, and have invested close to \$3 billion dollars in the state. In 2015, our members manufactured 50% of all new motor vehicles and 84% of green technology vehicles sold in Georgia.** Our members have made, and continue to make, substantial investments in research and development on automated vehicle (AV) technologies

Our Position

As the Georgia legislature completes its important work this session, we hope you will allow us the opportunity to share with you a few concerns our members have about SB 219. Our members appreciate the intent of the legislation to encourage testing and deployment of automated vehicles in Georgia. We believe legislation is unnecessary at this time. Global Automakers is unaware of any restrictions currently in statute preventing the testing and deployment of automated vehicles in the state.

We encourage Georgia policymakers to identify any potential barriers to testing and deployment of automated vehicles before embarking on new “authorizing” language. If any actual impediments exist, the state should then seek ways to remove those barriers.

Vehicle automation promises to deliver tremendous societal and lifesaving benefits. Therefore, public policy should foster and support this technology, and not hinder it. Any regulatory framework regarding automated vehicles should have two components: it should be (1) **flexible**, and (2) **national in scope**.

The legislation under consideration contributes to an **inconsistent “patchwork”** of state laws, encouraging conflicting definitions, performance criteria and guidelines that ultimately inhibit innovation.

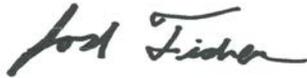
How Georgia Can Play a Role in Advancing Automated Vehicle Technology

Other states have refrained from enacting such laws, recognizing that complex rules and requirements could have the unintended consequences. Ohio, for example, has demonstrated how to promote autonomous vehicle testing without the need to enact new laws or rules. The city of Columbus was selected as the first “Smart City Challenge” grant recipient, becoming the first fully integrated connected transportation network in the nation.

In addition, Governor Kasich has designated a stretch of US-33 as an innovation corridor and committed state resources to accelerate testing. Finally, Ohio established the “Smart Belt Coalition,” working across state borders to support research and development of automated and connected vehicle technology.

Georgia can play a similar leadership role without enacting legislation by **(a) identifying any specific impediments or barriers to testing or operation that exist currently in statute, (b) convening key stakeholders and innovators to leverage resources and share best practices, and (c) collaborating with neighboring states to support regional efforts to advance automated vehicle technology while at the same time ensuring a national framework for automated vehicle policy.**

Sincerely,



Josh Fisher
Manager
State Government Affairs