



House Bill 8

Task Force to Study Issues Related to the Use of Self-Driving Vehicles

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: January 28, 2016

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS HB 8 WITH AMENDMENTS**. The bill would establish a task force to study the use of self-driving or autonomous vehicles in the state and MACo requests additional county representation in light of the policy changes these vehicles will require of counties.

Partially autonomous vehicles are already in use throughout the state today (cars with computer controlled traction systems or anti-collision systems) and fully autonomous vehicles which need only occasional or no human driver input are quickly becoming a practical reality. Such vehicles offer great benefits but will require significant policy and infrastructure changes at both the state and local levels. For counties, the three key issues with autonomous vehicles are: (1) changes in road design and maintenance; (2) law enforcement practices; and (3) liability issues.

MACo supports having a task force or workgroup to address these important issues and has been participating in an Autonomous Vehicle Working Group that was formed by the Maryland Department of Transportation in December of 2015. That working group is looking at the same issues as proposed by HB 8 but has several more local government participants.

Currently, HB 8 provides for a representative from the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association. MACo's attached amendment would also add a representative from the Maryland Sheriffs' Association and a county engineer or public works representative.

Given the enormous advancement of autonomous vehicles in just the last several years, HB 8 properly attempts to identify and address the issues they will pose to the State and local governments. Given the breadth of potential county impacts, MACo believes several additional county representatives are warranted on the task force. Accordingly, MACo requests the Committee give HB 8 a recommendation of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**.

MACo Amendment to HB 8 (adding a sheriff and county engineer/public works representative)

On page 2, after line 23 insert:

“(IV) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MARYLAND SHERIFFS’ ASSOCIATION;

(V) ONE COUNTY ENGINEER OR PUBLIC WORKS REPRESENTATIVE, RECOMMENDED BY THE MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES;”;

in line 24, strike “(IV)” and substitute “**(VI)**”; and in line 26, strike “(v)” and substitute “**(VII)**”.