



Testimony before the
Senate Commerce Committee

Matthew Hall, Business Agent
Teamsters Local Union 696

March 11th 2020

Oppose Senate Bill 435

Mrs. Chairwoman and members of the committee:

My name is Matthew Hall and I am the political Coordinator for Teamsters Joint Council 56. The Teamsters represent around 10,000 workers in the state of Kansas. Teamsters Joint Council 56 strongly opposes this bill. We have several concerns with opening up our public walkways and streets to operated, we have safety concerns, workforce concerns and liability concerns.

We have several safety concerns with this bill. The bill does not speak to testing and deployment and therefore, companies can currently deploy without testing under this bill. In all cases, there needs to be successful testing of this technology before deployment. The average adult human walking speed is approximately 3 mph. If these devices are to share sidewalks and crosswalks with pedestrians, machinery that can weigh several hundred to several thousand pounds with no operator then they should move no faster than pedestrians and certainly not four times the speed of the average human. Although the bill text outlaws the transportation of hazardous materials, without a human monitoring the delivery of a package, any city, state, or other local governments should also be able to restrict delivery items that can be stolen or lost (weapons, knives, chemicals, medicine, etc.). We feel any bill must have a mechanism to record incidents and accidents of the devices. Reports documenting these occurrences must be public as it impacts our community's safety.

This bill will negatively affect our communities if these devices replace good paying jobs for workers that contribute and pay taxes into local and state governments. There is currently a proposal in Congress that could be mirrored in state. This proposal includes ideas such as: Companies must provide (180) days advanced notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions and provide (270) days advanced notice if jobs will be eliminated. Employers must bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology. Require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employees who will be affected by the introduction of new technology. Companies must either provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology or to employees who will lose their job to help these workers obtain a different position at a similar company.

Under the bill, clarity is needed on who is liable for damages if the devices injure, kill, or cause a traffic or other accident resulting in damage, injury, or death. The operator of these devices must be an employee who is trained in the technology and not an independent contractor. Damages to the device and caused by the device must be the responsibility of the company. Under the insurance section it only identifies the "business entity" as needing to maintain at least \$100,000

coverage. Any dollar amount must take into consideration the additional risk of potential pedestrian collisions or traffic accidents. Also there must be greater clarification of “remote support” or “supervision” by a person. There is no stipulation that an operator must be within a certain number of feet, unlike in the mobile carrying device language. If the device injures someone, it is crucial that an operator be nearby in order to administer aid or call for assistance.