



March 18, 2026

The Honorable Brad Tabke
Co-Chair, House Committee on
Transportation Finance and Policy
5th Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Jon Koznick
Co-Chair, House Committee on
Transportation Finance and Policy
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Amend HF 3513 – *Regulating certain autonomous vehicles*

Dear Chairs Tabke and Koznick, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of Chamber of Progress, a tech industry association supporting public policies to build a society in which all people benefit from technological advances, I **respectfully urge you to reject the delete-everything amendment to HF 3513**, which would function as a ban on autonomous trucking in Minnesota by limiting fully automated vehicles to those weighing less than 10,000 pounds.

We support HF 3513 as introduced, as it would establish a clear, statewide framework and permitting pathway for the safe deployment and operation of AVs – including AV trucking – in Minnesota.

Autonomous trucking has the potential to reduce deadly crashes, strengthen supply chains, reduce harmful emissions, and lower the cost of moving goods at a time when reliability and affordability matter more than ever. It can also expand economic opportunity by creating new, high-quality jobs and helping the United States remain globally competitive in transportation and logistics. **By blocking this technology, the amendment in HF 3513 would deny Minnesotans these concrete safety and economic benefits and put Minnesota on the sidelines of a critical innovation.**

Autonomous trucks can address labor shortages and bring down the cost of shipping

Across the country, the trucking industry has experienced extreme turnover and widespread job vacancies, resulting in significant delays to product shipments and rising prices for basic necessities. Though exacerbated by the pandemic, retention has been an issue in trucking for decades. The American Trucking Association reports an annual

turnover rate of 90% and projects that the nationwide shortage of truckers costs the freight industry \$95.5 million weekly¹ and will double to over 160,000 job vacancies by 2030.² **Notably, Minnesota has a tough trucking job market, with 34% daily turnover and a nearly seven-day hiring time, making driver recruitment especially challenging.**³

Autonomous vehicles offer a solution to help fill the gap left by a strained labor market and high demand for timely shipping.

The crisis facing the trucking industry hasn't just resulted in delayed shipments, but also in higher prices for consumers. Rising fuel and labor expenses have driven up shipping costs, which in turn have caused an increase in the price of consumer goods.⁴ To attract and retain drivers, trucking companies have raced to offer increased pay and larger bonuses.⁵ The combination of growing labor expenses and rising fuel costs has resulted in a spike in the cost of shipping and a corresponding rise in the price of consumer goods.⁶ Those price increases hit low-income families the hardest, with the cost of some everyday groceries increasing by as much as 50 percent.⁷ Continuous, efficient AV freight operations reduce delays, congestion, and deadhead miles,⁸ cutting logistics costs that raise prices for families. With freight running around the clock, AV trucks help stabilize the cost of groceries and everyday goods.

Autonomous trucks can make Minnesota roads safer for everyone

Safety is another urgent reason to act. Even with recent progress, nearly 40,000 people were killed on U.S. roads in 2024.⁹ In 2023, crashes involving large trucks killed more than 15 people every day.¹⁰ Human error remains the overwhelming factor in crashes, but autonomous trucks do not suffer from fatigue, distraction, or impairment. Early deployments are already proving this point.

¹ Pamela De Leon. "Report shows truck driver shortage costs freight industry \$95.5 million weekly." *Commercial Carrier Journal*, Feb. 10, 2025. <https://www.ccjdigital.com/business/article/15736724/truck-driver-shortage-costs-freight-industry-955-million-weekly>

² Michelle Fleury. "How will the US deal with a shortage of 80,000 truckers?" BBC News, Dec. 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-59136957>

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ AFP Global Logistics. *The Impact of Fuel Prices on Supply Chain Transportation*. AFP Global Logistics, Feb. 3, 2025. <https://afplus.com/impact-fuel-prices-supply-chain-transportation/> afplus.com

⁵ Don Lee. "Facing record labor shortages, trucking firms battle fiercely for drivers." *LA Times*, Dec. 2021. <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2021-12-07/facing-record-labor-shortages-trucking-firms-battle-fiercely-for-drivers>

⁶ Alex Longley, Catherine Bosley, and Deirdre Hipwell. "Out-of-Control Shipping Costs Fire Up Prices From Coffee to Toys." *Bloomberg Business*, Dec. 2021. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-06-12/out-of-control-shipping-costs-fire-up-prices-from-coffee-to-toys>

⁷ Nelson D. Schwartz and Coral Murphy Marcos. "Higher Food Prices Hit the Poor and Those Who Help Them." *NY Times*, Dec. 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/27/business/economy/food-prices-us.html>

⁸ Truckstop. "Deadhead Miles: Definition, Costs and How to Avoid Them." May 28, 2025. <https://truckstop.com/blog/deadhead-miles/>

⁹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. "NHTSA Estimates 39,345 Traffic Fatalities in 2024." Apr. 8, 2025. <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/nhtsa-estimates-39345-traffic-fatalities-2024>

¹⁰ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts Research Note: Overview of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes in 2023*. Apr., 2025. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813705>

Aurora, a U.S.-based autonomous trucking company, is already demonstrating the real-world potential of these safety gains. As of October 2025, the company has logged more than 100,000 driverless miles with a perfect safety record¹¹ under a comprehensive safety case that combines millions of virtual simulations with extensive closed-course and on-road testing.¹² In critical scenarios, autonomous trucks outperform human drivers. For example, Aurora's trucks can detect hazards hundreds of meters away seconds before the naked eye, even at night.¹³ Taken together, these results show that autonomous trucking can be deployed carefully and responsibly, improving road safety rather than undermining it.

Autonomous trucks can also reduce long-term environmental costs from pollution

While trucks represent only 6% of vehicles on the road, they produce over 35% of transportation-generated nitrous oxide and 25% of on-road greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁴ Since autonomous vehicles can be programmed to optimize their routes and adhere to traffic rules and speed limits, autonomous trucks will ultimately use energy more efficiently. According to the Southwest Research Institute, autonomous vehicles can be up to 20% more fuel efficient than human-driven vehicles.¹⁵ Deploying autonomous trucks can help Minnesota achieve zero emissions by 2050, as outlined in the Climate Action Framework.¹⁶

As amended, HF 3513 risks putting Minnesota on the sidelines

Two dozen states, including Nevada, Arizona, and Texas, have already authorized autonomous trucking, and testing and early deployment are accelerating across the Sunbelt. Those states are gaining a head start in capturing the safety, economic, and environmental benefits of this technology. HF 3513 would cut Minnesota off from this emerging freight corridor, leaving residents with slower access to goods and businesses with less reliable supply chains than competitors in neighboring states. At a time when logistics efficiency drives growth, banning autonomous trucks would sideline Minnesota from future economic development.

¹¹ Aurora Innovation, Inc. "Aurora Expands Driverless Trucking Service from Fort Worth to El Paso." Business Wire, Oct. 28, 2025. <https://ir.aurora.tech/news-events/press-releases/detail/128/aurora-expands-driverless-trucking-service-from-fort-worth-to-el-paso>

¹² Aurora. *Aurora's Safety Case Framework*. Jan., 2023. <https://safetyscaseframework.aurora.tech/gsn>

¹³ Aurora. "Detecting a pedestrian running across the highway." <https://aurora.tech/capabilities/detecting-a-pedestrian-running-across-the-highway>

¹⁴ David Shepardson. "California moves to phase-out diesel-powered trucks, cut locomotive pollution." *Reuters*, Apr. 28, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/california-moves-phase-out-diesel-powered-trucks-cut-locomotive-pollution-2023-04-28/>

¹⁵ Southwest Research Institute. "SwRI Achieves 20% Improvement in Vehicle Fuel Efficiency With Connectivity, Automation." Oct. 6, 2020. <https://www.swri.org/newsroom/press-releases/swri-achieves-20-improvement-vehicle-fuel-efficiency-connectivity-automation>

¹⁶ One Minnesota Plan. "Greenhouse Gas Emissions." n.d. <https://mn.gov/mmb/one-mn-plan/measurable-goals/ghg-emissions.jsp>

Mandating a human driver for autonomous trucks is also a step backward for safety and innovation. Autonomous systems are designed to reduce preventable crashes, road deaths, and serious injuries by addressing human error, which remains the leading cause of traffic fatalities. Requiring a human driver negates many of these safety advantages while increasing costs and limiting deployment. AV trucking also opens new, stable, tech-driven, and localized jobs in remote operations, maintenance, and logistics,¹⁷ with apprenticeship and training programs already preparing workers for these high-growth careers.¹⁸ HF 3513 would stall a technology that can save lives, strengthen supply chains, improve fuel efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and expand economic opportunity, leaving Minnesota behind on all fronts.

For these reasons, we ask you to **reject the delete-everything amendment to HF 3513** and **preserve the bill as originally introduced**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Marshall", enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Kouri Marshall

Senior Director of State & Local Public Policy, Central/Southern Region

www.progresschamber.org

¹⁷ Aurora. "What do self-driving vehicles mean for jobs and the economy?" May 18, 2023.

<https://aurora.tech/newsroom/what-do-self-driving-vehicles-mean-for-jobs-and-the-economy>

¹⁸ Gallatin College. "Photonics and Laser Technology."

<https://gallatin.montana.edu/programs/photonics-laser.html>