If the first couple of months of 2018 are any indication, states are still anxious to make sure they get a piece of the action as the development and deployment of driverless cars proceed in the years ahead. I have updates on new executive orders in Arizona and Ohio, newly approved regulations in California, legislation under consideration in Indiana and Nebraska and a newly formed advisory council in Minnesota, among other state developments around the country. Also, updates on federal guidance on autonomous vehicles and the status of federal legislation. Plus, a plethora of links to articles on the latest industry and technology developments, shifting public opinion on autonomous vehicles and how cities can prepare for the autonomous future.

**State Activities on Autonomous Vehicles**

- **Arizona:** Gov. Doug Ducey issued an executive order [2] March 1 (updating a 2015 executive order) that removes a requirement that a human driver be behind the wheel of an autonomous vehicle at all times to take over in case something goes wrong. “As technology advances, our policies and priorities must adapt to remain competitive in today’s economy,” the governor said in a statement [3]. “This executive order embraces new technologies by creating an environment that supports autonomous vehicle innovation and maintains a focus on public safety.” Arizona reportedly [4] already has more than 600 self-driving cars being operated on public roads by companies like General Motors, Intel, Uber and Waymo. Waymo has reportedly [5] received permits in Arizona to operate a ride-hailing service without human drivers.

- **California:** Arizona has been in close competition [6] with neighboring California, where officials recently announced that fully driverless cars will be allowed on public roads next month but where self-driving car companies are required to obtain permits and submit annual reports on software disengagements (the frequency with which human drivers had to take control of their driverless vehicles). The state’s latest annual autonomous vehicle disengagement report [7], released in January [8], showed GM and Waymo leading the way in terms of number of miles driven in the state. ... The California Department of Motor Vehicles announced last month [9] that the Office of Administrative Law had approved the regulations [10] governing driverless testing and public use of autonomous vehicles on California roads. The new regulations will pave the way for ride-hailing companies such as Uber and Lyft to begin offering rides in driverless cars in the state, the Los Angeles Times reported [11]. Driverless trucks, motorcycles and cars with trailers are not allowed under the regulations, at least for now. While driverless cars will no longer need to have a driver inside, a remote operator will still be required to monitor the vehicle as it’s being tested on public roads, the Associated Press noted [12]. Companies wishing to test must seek permission from law enforcement and provide them with routes the cars will take.

- **Colorado:** The Denver Post reported [13] in January that the Colorado Department of Transportation was considering a congestion-relief plan for Denver’s western suburbs that could include a dedicated lane for autonomous vehicles.

- **District of Columbia:** The District is inviting companies to test autonomous vehicle technology on one street in the Federal Triangle area that connects the new Wharf waterfront plaza development to the National Mall. The stretch of 10th Street is basically a straight line with few pedestrians but it
has gone from no activity at all to heavy traffic almost overnight as a result of the new development. The city partnered with the Southwest Business Improvement District to issue a request for information for an AV pilot program, according to Future Structure [14].

- **Florida:** South Florida’s Sun-Sentinel newspaper [15] reported recently on how self-driving impacts will impact the regions roads over the next 25 years.

- **Indiana:** Lawmakers have been working on legislation (HB 1341 [16]) to set safety and other standards for driverless cars in the Hoosier State while also trying to attract the new industry. The bill was introduced by Rep. Ed Soliday, a member of the CSG Transportation & Infrastructure Public Policy Committee who attended our Autonomous & Connected Vehicle Policy Academy [17] last year in Detroit. Parts of the bill have been opposed by the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the trade association that represents Ford, GM, Toyota and other automakers (which provided support for the policy academy). The alliance believes by establishing a certification system for vehicles operating in the state, the legislation could have negative consequences and establish a negative precedent, The Journal-Gazette reported [18]. “All we want to do is have some accountability for safety until the federal government steps in,” Soliday told the Post-Tribune [18] last month. The federal government has offered guidance through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration but a bipartisan federal bill that had been moving through Congress appears to have stalled in the Senate (see below).

- **Iowa:** A state DOT official said recently [19] data collection will be the key to a successful future for automated vehicles in Iowa. “The rise in technologies related to connected and AVs has caused us to look at the data we currently have and identify gaps that need to be filled in the coming years to keep Iowa in the forefront of data collection and utilization to support an increased level of vehicle automation,” said Donna Matulac, the Iowa DOT’s automated vehicle technologies project manager.

- **Maryland:** The Hogan Administration announced last month [20] it’s making available permits for the testing of connected and automated vehicle technology in the state. The first permits were issued to a Howard County company to allow testing at parking lots owned by the Maryland Department of Transportation.

- **Michigan:** During a recent appearance at the Washington Auto Show, Gov. Rick Snyder predicted that driverless vehicle technology isn’t going to change things overnight, Governing magazine reported [21]. “The technology is evolving very quickly. I don’t view technology as the constraint here. This gets back to real people, and how fast this is accepted,” he said. Automakers and public officials will need to tell the public about the benefits of self-driving and connected vehicles, the governor said.

- **Minnesota:** Gov. Mark Dayton this week formed a 15-member advisory council that will take up a number of policy and infrastructure questions surrounding autonomous vehicles, The Star Tribune reported [22]. The panel is directed to issue policy recommendations and report back to the governor by December.

- **Nebraska:** Lawmakers convened a hearing [23] last month to consider two autonomous vehicle-related bills (LB 989 [24] and LB 1122 [25]). One of the bills [26], offered by Sen. Tyson Larson, would allow autonomous vehicles on state roads and highways but still require testers to be able to continuously monitor them and take control of the vehicle if necessary. It also would require vehicle operators to submit proof of insurance to state officials and create a council of state and industry officials that could develop future laws. The second bill [27], offered by Sen. Anna Wishart, would allow researchers to test autonomous vehicles only in Lincoln. It would authorize the city to join forces with a private company for a pilot project. As in Indiana, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers has expressed concern that Larson’s bill in particular could unintentionally hinder the fast-growing, fast-changing technology.

- **Ohio:** Gov. John Kasich signed an executive order [28] in January to create a statewide center for autonomous vehicle research and smart road technology called DriveOhio [29], the Associated Press reported [30]. Jim Barna, assistant director and chief engineer at the Ohio Department of Transportation (and a speaker [31] at our Detroit policy academy [32] last year), is leaving that role to
become executive director of DriveOhio.

- **Texas:** The Lone Star State was touted in the pages of *U.S. News & World Report* [33] recently as one of the states making a particularly strong push into vehicle automation. At the heart of the state’s efforts is the Texas AV Proving Ground Partnership, which brings together the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, the University of Texas in Austin and the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio. The partnership is focused on testing emerging technologies, whether it be on HOV lanes in Houston or port facilities in El Paso, and collecting lots of data.

- **Washington:** The city of Bellevue’s efforts to point toward a future with vehicles that are autonomous, connected, electric and shared are detailed in a recent issue of *The Bellevue Reporter.* [34]

- **Wisconsin:** Like Texas, the Badger State was selected by the U.S. Department of Transportation as one of 10 “proving grounds” for autonomous vehicle technologies. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin are developing a corridor on the Madison campus to test autonomous and connected vehicles, *The Badger Herald reported* [35]. An autonomous shuttle will come to Madison in April that will operate on a portion of the test route.

**Federal Activities on Autonomous Vehicles**

- **DOT Listening Session/AV 3.0 Framework:** The U.S. Department of Transportation convened a listening session on autonomous vehicles last week that included the private sector and federal and state regulators, *The Verge* [36], *The Washington Post* [37], and SmartCitiesDIVE [38] reported. One of the key quotes from the event came from Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao who reportedly said: “We are not in the business—we don’t know how—to pick the best technology or to pick the winners. ... We’re not in the business of picking winners or losers. The market will decide what is the most effective solution.” The focus of the summit was a draft of version 3 of the NHTSA guidance on autonomous vehicles, a final version of which is expected early this summer [39].

- **Federal Autonomous Vehicle Legislation:** In a letter to Senate leaders [40] this week, major automakers and more than 100 tech companies and interest groups urged lawmakers to take up, before the end of May, a bill that has been stalled in the Senate which is aimed at speeding the deployment and testing of autonomous vehicles, *Insurance Journal reported* [41]. The bill, S. 1885 (known as the AV START Act) [42], was approved in committee last year but efforts by the measure’s sponsors to pass it through the full Senate by unanimous consent have been held up by a group of Senate Democrats concerned with safety issues [43].


**Further Reading**

**Industry & Technology Developments**

- “Here’s Why Big Automakers Are Investing in May Mobility, an Autonomous-Shuttle Startup,” [50] Car and Driver, March 2, 2018.
• “Self-driving cars will require new business models: Carmakers, tech companies and ride-hailing firms are all fighting for a piece of the action.” [52] The Economist, March 1, 2018.
• “Uber is working with Toyota to create a vehicle and system that is built for ride-sharing.” [69] Recode, January 8, 2018.

Public Opinion on Autonomous Vehicles

• “AAA: Drivers becoming less fearful of self-driving car technology.” [73] USA Today, January 24, 2018.

Autonomous Vehicles, Mobility & Cities

• “Shared mobility principles for the rapidly approaching AV era.” [78] State Smart Transportation Initiative, February 12, 2018.
“You probably won’t own a self-driving car, but you’ll ride in them a lot.” [80] Popular Science, February 1, 2018.

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Tags:
Capitol Comments [84]
Policy Area [85]› Technology [86]› Policy Area [85]› Transportation [87]› Traffic Safety [88]› Policy Area [85]› Transportation [87]› Transportation Planning [89]

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