

**TESTIMONY OF JOHN O'DONNELL
WASHINGTON AREA NEW AUTO DEALERS ASSOCIATION**

**COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT
Public Hearing on Autonomous Vehicles Legislation B23-232 & B23-248**

July 2, 2019

Chairwoman Cheh and Members of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. My name is John O'Donnell, and I am the President and CEO of the Washington Area New Auto Dealers Association ("WANADA"). I am pleased to submit written testimony on behalf of WANADA's members.

WANADA was founded in 1917 to advance the automobile business and the success of its members. Our principal role is to promote all aspects of the retail automobile business in the Washington region. WANADA also represents its dealer membership in the state, local and national public policy processes and speaks publicly on their behalf. Our membership is comprised of over 270 new car dealerships and associated businesses. We are best known for hosting the annual Washington Auto Show at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Last year marked the 77^h anniversary of the Auto Show!

Over those nearly eight decades, the Washington Auto Show has grown into one of the largest auto shows in the world. The Washington Auto Show pumps tens of millions of dollars into the District's economy every year and supports scores of jobs year round. In 2017, WANADA launched MobilityTalks International. MobilityTalks provides a forum for governments from around the world to share perspectives and best practices regarding the changing legal and regulatory transportation landscape, including the challenges associated with the rise of connected and autonomous vehicles. In so many ways, the District truly is at the center of the autonomous vehicle discussion.

I am pleased to provide written testimony in support of both *Bill 23-232: The Autonomous Vehicles Testing Program Amendment Act of 2019* and *Bill 23-248: Autonomous Vehicle Amendment Act of 2019*. Both bills reflect a well-balanced and measured approach to the roll-out of autonomous vehicles in the District. This sensible and at the same time forward-looking approach will serve the District well as it works to develop the regulatory framework for this rapidly evolving area of transportation policy.

Since the start of 2019, some 100 bills dealing with autonomous vehicles have been introduced in 27 states including the District. Jurisdictions around the country sense the reality that AVs are coming quickly and, if the experts are correct, in large numbers. Indeed, an Allied Market Research study projects the global market for autonomous vehicles will expand more than 10-fold within the next decade.¹ Chairwoman Cheh, as you know, the Autonomous Vehicle Act of 2012, was a strong start for the District—it put our city at the forefront of the AV revolution.

The two bills being discussed today, if enacted, would establish the necessary framework for the District to become one of the few places in the nation with a full-fledged regulatory infrastructure to support the responsible testing of autonomous vehicles. From the liability and data sharing requirements, to the well-concieved liability requirements, these bills will provide a stable and reasonable approach to what in all likelihood will be a transportation and mobility seachange for the District, our country and beyond. And no mistake, what is coming is indeed nothing short of a seachange for how automobiles and people move around the District and across the country. The District is well-served by its thoughtful approach to policy in this area.

¹Rahul Kumar, *Allied Market Research*, <https://www.alliedmarketresearch.com/autonomous-vehicle-market>, (Accessed 1, May 2019)

As the legislative process unfolds, WANADA asks to be included in any working group formed to consider changes to the proposed legislation. Among items of note, WANADA is interested in offering minor clarifications to certain definitions, as well as a few modifications to the requirements related to a testing applicant's self-certification. Thank you again for the opportunity to present written testimony.