Oregon Taskforce on Autonomous Vehicles

Forth appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to the Oregon Autonomous Vehicles (AV) Taskforce Meeting on August 15, 2018.

Forth is a trade association and advocate for electric and advanced mobility, with over 150 members including many major car companies, charging companies, utilities, and public interest groups. Both directly and through our closely affiliated charitable arm, the 501c3 Forth Mobility Fund, we manage the nation’s only brand neutral electric vehicle showroom, dozens of ride & drive events, a range of demonstration and pilot projects, and policy advocacy work. Forth also manages the Roadmap Conference, the nation’s leading conference on electric and advanced mobility, which ensures we are up to date on the most current research in the field.

Forth has developed and led several demonstration projects in Oregon. Examples include the Community Electric Vehicle Project (C-EV) with Hacienda CDC, an affordable housing complex in Northeast Portland. The project sought to bring a new transportation option to the Cully neighborhood while also evaluating whether an electric vehicle (EV) car share could be a financially sustainable, convenient, affordable, and reliable mode of transport.

Forth also conducted a similar Community Electric Bicycle Project with the Community Cycling Center to serve unlicensed residents as well as an e-bike and scooter program at the Lloyd EcoDistrict. These past projects tested scenarios where providing shared transport to a trusted community partner could provide a needed community transportation option while also introducing the alternative mode to that community through education and exposure. The projects yielded lessons that will help us strengthen future projects.

Forth has also conducted extensive community outreach to assess mobility needs and barriers, both directly and in partnership with OPAL Environmental Justice. Our work with OPAL is one of the only examples of community-led assessment of the opportunities and barriers posed by new mobility options in underserved communities. This work was designed to inform future demonstration projects and will provide a base level of education to many of the communities that we aim to serve through this work.

Similarly, testing and deployment of autonomous driving technologies could have an enormously positive impact and an equitable impact on our state and communities, whether rural or urban. Permitting testing and deployment, in a timely manner, would ensure Oregon is on a level playing field with Arizona, California, Florida, Nevada, and Texas, to name just a few.

Autonomous vehicle technology will create opportunities and challenges for Oregon and now is the time to prepare and implement testing and deployment recommendations and policies that will create benefits and mitigate negative impacts caused by this technological shift.
You’ll hear from Technology Network (TechNet) and the Internet Association (IA) regarding how Oregon can test and deploy autonomous driving technologies based on experiences of testing and deployment in the states mentioned above.

Oregon has a history of being collaborative, entrepreneurial, and on the forefront of new technologies. By permitting testing and deployment within a prescribed timeframe will ensure Oregon and its communities are not left behind.

Thank you,

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