



Testimony before the
Committee on Transportation
Derrick Metzger, Shop Steward
Teamsters Local Union 696
February 15th 2018

Oppose HOUSE BILL 2605

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Derrick Metzger and I am a driving Instructor for the Teamsters Military Assistance Program and shop steward for Teamsters Local 696. It is my job to instruct and train soldiers getting out of the military on the proper and safe ways to operate tractor trailer semis and to help them get their CDL's. I am here today to speak to you in opposition of HB 2605. We don't feel that this technology is completely tested nor do we feel that it is safe.

As professional drivers we are trained to expect the unexpected, to react at a moments notice, to be aware of our surroundings at all times. Something that we know as professional and trained drivers is, that the vast majority of truck accidents are not caused by driver operator error but by other motorists on the road. Connected vehicle technology, also known as "platooning" forces drivers to look at that rear of the truck in front of the driver and limits situational awareness for the secondary driver. Trained and experienced drivers can provide operational information that sensors and cameras are unlikely to detect including tire blowouts, uneven pavement and potholes too small for sensors to detect. This legislation fails to require that a trained CDL driver be present in both trucks at all times. In other states and across Europe, this technology has led to so called "cooperative driving" and driverless trucks.

This technology requires trucks to be 30-50 feet from each other in order to work, less than a truck-length, effectively bypassing Kansas's tailgating law. This is a danger to the drivers in the 2nd and 3rd vehicles. If something were to happen and there was a technology break down or computer error then 30-50 feet is not enough time for a driver to correct and stop causing the potential for a multiple truck and car pile up. There are dangers of other drivers weaving in between the trucks and breaking the link. Additionally there is nothing in this bill about the potential for cyber attacks with trucks that could use this technology for massive terror attacks.

Automation or partial automation in an uncontrolled and taxpayer funded environment like Kansas's public roads should not happen as a test. We shouldn't run experiments on our public highways, jeopardizing safety, simply for the increased bottom lines stemming from *potential* economic benefits of platooning like higher fuel efficiency, decreased labor costs or larger output from their existing fleet.

In closing, in our opinion, there are too many questions and concerns about safety with this technology for the state to move forward changing legislation to implement it. I urge you to think about your constituents on our roads and vote no.