

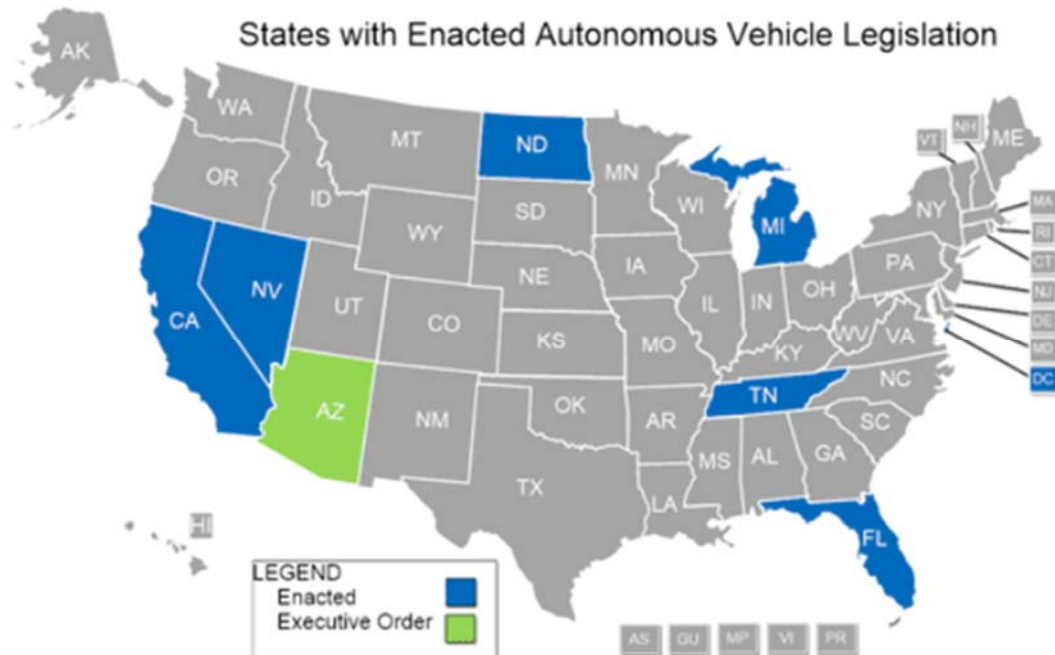
## How Will States Regulate Cars That Drive Themselves?, by Andrew L. Smith, Esq.

Did you ever think you would see the day when self-driving cars were invented? It sounds like the future, and the future is now. The Jetsons car is really here. The market for vehicle automation technology could be worth \$87 billion by 2030, according to Lux Research. The industry could one day even eliminate the leading cause of traffic fatalities – human error. So when will you be able to purchase your own self-driving car? The year 2025 is the date often mentioned as to when we may finally see the self-driving car, but the jury is still out.



The California Department of Motor Vehicles is finalizing new regulations for self-driving cars with a target release date before 2017. California is always on the forefront when it comes to regulating new technology – the state was also the first to release a statute addressing ride-sharing companies such as Uber and Lyft back in 2014. See Assembly Bill No. 2293. Since that time, 28 other states have put statutes in place governing the ride-sharing industry. Is this a sign of the future when it comes to driverless vehicles?

Sixteen states introduced legislation related to autonomous vehicles in 2015, up from 12 states in 2014, nine states and D.C. in 2013, and six states in 2012.



Nevada was the first state to authorize the operation of autonomous vehicles in 2011. Since then, five other states, California, Florida, Michigan, North Dakota and Tennessee, and Washington D.C., have passed some form of legislation related to autonomous vehicles.

1. Arizona's governor signed an executive order in August 2015 directing various agencies to "undertake any necessary steps to support the testing and operation of self-driving vehicles on public roads within Arizona." He also ordered the enabling of pilot programs at universities and developed rules to be followed by the programs. The order established a Self-Driving Vehicle Oversight Committee, as well.

(Continued on page 11)



## **How Will States Regulate Cars** *(cont'd.)*

*(Continued from page 10)*

2. California's initial regulations require the Department of the California Highway Patrol to adopt safety standards and performance requirements to ensure the safe operation and testing of autonomous vehicles on public roads. The statute permits autonomous vehicles to be operated or tested on public roads pending the adoption of safety standards and performance requirements that would be adopted under this bill. These safety standards, as referenced above, will be released sometime this year.
3. Florida's legislation declares the legislative intent to encourage the safe development, testing, and operation of motor vehicles with autonomous technology on public roads of the state. Florida made clear the state does not prohibit, nor specifically regulate, the testing or operation of autonomous technology in motor vehicles on public roads.
4. Michigan's statute limits liability of vehicle manufacturers for damages in a product liability suit resulting from modifications made by a third-party to an automated vehicle or automated vehicle technology under certain circumstances.
5. Nevada's statute requires an autonomous vehicle being tested on a highway to meet certain conditions relating to a human operator. The statute also states the manufacturer of a vehicle converted to be an autonomous vehicle by a third-party is immune from liability for certain injuries.
6. North Dakota's regulations provide guidelines for research into the self-driving car industry and technological developments.
7. Tennessee's regulations prohibit local governments from banning the use of motor vehicles equipped with autonomous technology.
8. Washington D.C.'s statute defines "autonomous vehicle" as "a vehicle capable of navigating District roadways and interpreting traffic-control devices without a driver actively operating any of the vehicle's control systems." The statute requires a human driver "prepared to take control of the autonomous vehicle at any moment." The regulations restrict conversion to recent vehicles, and addresses liability of the original manufacturer of a converted vehicle.

Stay tuned for all the new developments in the world of self-driving cars, including regulations in your own state.

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