

Comment from Brent Kirk

As a driver of commercial vehicles with over 25 years of experience in both local pick-up and delivery and Linehaul driving freight between cities in the southeastern United States I have been in many situations where immediate action needed to be taken to avoid an accident. Many instances do not involve just breaking to avoid an accident, sometimes you must steer towards the road shoulder or medium, or even accelerate to avoid an accident situation. These situations are not only caused by other drivers actions but also road conditions and weather. I have also had instances of partial or complete electronic failures in my vehicle, which require a quick human decision to avoid danger to the motoring public. For these reasons I believe a human driver should always be present in a commercial vehicle, just as we do not allow airplanes in the air without human pilots, even though the auto pilot is normally capable of flying and even landing an aircraft. But because of weather, electronics, and even human/terrorist threats and actions we always require human pilots in the plane. Just as the auto pilot has made aviation extremely safe, I believe automated driving systems will greatly improve the safety on American roadways. Commercial vehicles weight up to 80,000 pounds, even an empty tractor-trailer has over 35,000 pounds and is 65 feet long. For these reasons I believe it is unsafe to be motoring public to allow commercial vehicles on the roadways of America without a human driver ready to take immediate control of the vehicle. Thank you; Brent Kirk