

I am very concerned about the implementation of autonomous vehicles to our roadways, both as a professional truck driver by trade, a member of the motoring public, and a parent. I currently drive a 2019 Volvo VNL with collision avoidance. On numerous roads along my route, I come to a small bridge or shift in the roadway. My truck has frequently alarmed and applied the brakes because of this. One concern I have, of many, is adverse weather conditions. If the truck that I currently drive was 100% autonomous, would it have remained in the lane once the brakes were applied so abruptly on ice? Will autonomous trucks recognize lane shifts in interstate construction 100% of the time? I feel that autonomous vehicles as a whole is a complete misplacement of research and funding. In my most honest and humble opinion, I believe that more thorough driver training and higher wages is the answer to the truck driver shortage, not autonomy. Commercial Motor Vehicles in any capacity (city bus, school bus, semi-truck, etc.) are behemoth vehicles with an even larger responsibility. I do not believe that 13'6" high, 75ft. long, and 80,000lbs. is really the vehicle that needs to be driven by robotics. Not to mention school and city transit buses that deal with an even more rigorous roadway system than your typical highway tractor-trailer and they are hauling people. The level of attention and precise detail required in these positions is nothing we should give to computers. Factories have for years used robots in their production and manufacturing. However, driving, while it may be repetitive, it is nowhere near constant. The same roadway can change multiple times in a day depending on the weather and innumerable other factors. I do not mean to sound like I am stuck in the past, but I simply cannot see a future of autonomy in vehicles. The safety measures and financial expenditures necessary for it to be a success, in my opinion would be better served by hiring a human driver qualified for the position.