

Comment from Michael Worley

Posted by the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration** on Aug 22, 2022

Today, any person in Chandler, Arizona, as well as an increasing percentage of the public in San Francisco, California, can take a ride in a car without a driver and safely make it to their destination with ever-increasing reliability. But this is a new development: It has only been since Fall 2020 (months into the pandemic) that availability has begun in Chandler using Waymo's self-driving technology, and only since February of this year that availability in San Francisco began using Cruise's (largely owned by Petitioner GM) self-driving technology.

And make no mistake: this is the beginning, not the end, of the availability of self-driving cars: Cruise's entry into the San Francisco market has prompted Waymo to publish posts emphasizing that their employees are also receiving driverless rides in San Francisco. Both companies have long waiting lists as they begin deploying in San Francisco. Meanwhile, Argo AI, a partner of Petitioner Ford in the companion petition, has begun having their employees ride in the passenger seat in both Miami, Florida, and Austin, Texas, demonstrating increasing confidence in its self-driving technology. Other companies are trying a variety of methods to reach the same outcome. In short, the free market is working, and progress appears (finally) exponential.

For commenter Michael Worley, these developments are a gateway to freedom. Born with Cerebral Palsy, Mr. Worley practices law. He does not have a drivers' license, and his life is too valuable for him to change that. In 2014, Mr. Worley married his sweetheart Lizzie, and they have two kids. Unfortunately— but ultimately relevant to Mr. Worley's interest— Lizzie struggles with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, meaning at times they are a zero-driver household. Rides from friends and ride-sharing apps thankfully mitigate these challenges, but for Mr. Worley, just as there is certain pride in typing this document instead of dictating it to another person, ownership of a self-driving car or access to a ride-hail service that uses driverless technology seems game-changing.

As he has awaited the availability of self-driving cars in his home state of Utah, Mr. Worley has observed an additional avenue of hope: most companies that innovate in this field manufacture cars that are more energy-efficient, typically by using hybrid or electric cars. And some of these companies are committed to renewable energy as well.

This matters because Americans like Mr. and Mrs. Worley, as well as, he believes, their more able-bodied counterparts, will rapidly and overwhelmingly choose not to drive when the technology for driverless cars is available in their area. Why keep your hands on the wheel where you could read a book or play connect 4 with your kid? These Americans will be in cleaner, safer cars, meaningfully reducing pollution almost overnight. In short, self-driving cars are a free market solution to part of our climate change crisis that this administration should facilitate, and this petition is one step in doing so.

Mr. Worley strongly supports GM's petition as well as Ford's petition.