



PAVE Poll Briefing #4:

Americans' views of policy and regulation

Poll information: 1,200 adults from across the United States were polled between 2/27/20 and 3/5/20 on behalf of PAVE. 678 of these respondents reported owning cars with advanced driver assistance system (ADAS) features and were asked an additional battery of questions. A sample of 200 adults with reported "mobility issues" were also surveyed.

Autonomous driving technology is one of the most important and challenging issues facing regulators and policymakers today. Ensuring public safety in the short term without stifling innovation in an area that could dramatically improve road safety in the long term is especially challenging given the complexity of the technology and uncertainty about timelines for maturity. While PAVE is an educational organization that does not take positions on any specific policies, its survey of 1200 Americans can be useful for regulators and policymakers navigating this tricky topic.

Indeed, the results underline the importance of government in AV technology. Americans indicate relatively low levels of confidence in both AV technology itself and in the auto industry's ability to self-regulate, while ranking more education, more personal experience and government approval as measures that could boost their confidence in AVs. Though respondents were less certain in their responses to questions about the broader social impacts of AVs than about their personal preferences, many do expect impacts on employment, the cost of logistics, congestion and the environment.

The role of regulation

- 54% of respondents would trust AVs more if they had to receive government approval like a human driver's license, compared to 26% who would not.
- 36% of respondents say the auto industry is able to regulate itself on AV safety, compared to 34% who say it is not and 30% who are unsure.

Building trust

- 25% of respondents say they would "trust AVs more if they only traveled at less than 25 MPH" whereas 51% disagree and 24% are not sure.
- 51% of respondents agree with the statement "I would trust AVs more if, at first, they were used to move cargo, not humans" while 27% disagree and 22% say they are not sure.

Congestion impacts

- 45% of respondents believe AVs will not reduce the need to widen existing highways and build new ones, compared to 22% who believe they will and 33% who are not sure.
- 37% believe "AVs will get me where I need to go in less time," compared to 28% who disagree and 35% who are not sure.
- Respondents were evenly split on the question of whether "AVs will reduce highway traffic jams," with 34% saying they will, 33% saying they won't and 33% saying they are not sure.

- 44% agree with the statement “AVs will help traffic on city streets flow more smoothly,” while 24% disagree and 33% say they are not sure.

Cost impacts

- Respondents were split on whether “driving an AV will cause the cost of my auto insurance to go down,” with 29% saying it would, 30% saying it wouldn’t and 41% were not sure.
- 33% of respondents say “AVs will lower the cost of getting goods to market, resulting in lower prices” whereas 29% disagree and 39% say they are not sure.

Employment

- 53% of respondents believe that “AVs will take away jobs from taxi drivers and ride-sharing drivers,” with 25% disagreeing and 21% unsure.
- 42% say “AVs will take away jobs from over-the-road truckers,” 32% disagree and 25% are unsure.

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