An act relating to vehicles with autonomous technology; defining the term "autonomous technology"; providing legislative intent and findings; amending s. 316.003, F.S.; defining the terms "autonomous vehicle" and "autonomous technology" when used in provisions for traffic control; creating s. 316.85, F.S.; authorizing a person who possesses a valid driver license to operate an autonomous vehicle; specifying that the person who causes the vehicle's autonomous technology to engage is the operator; creating s. 319.145, F.S.; requiring an autonomous vehicle registered in this state to meet federal standards and regulations for a motor vehicle; specifying certain requirements for such vehicle; providing for the application of certain federal regulations; authorizing the operation of vehicles equipped with autonomous technology by certain persons for testing purposes under certain conditions; requiring an instrument of insurance, surety bond, or self-insurance prior to the testing of a vehicle; limiting liability of the original manufacturer of a vehicle converted to an autonomous vehicle; directing the department to prepare a report on the safe testing and operation of vehicles equipped with autonomous technology and submit the report to the Legislature by a certain date; providing an effective date.

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Vehicles equipped with autonomous technology; intent.—

(1) As used in this section, the term "autonomous technology" means technology installed on a motor vehicle that has the capability to drive the vehicle on which the technology is installed without the active control or monitoring by a human operator. The term excludes a motor vehicle enabled with active safety systems or driver assistance systems, including, without limitation, a system to provide electronic blind spot assistance, crash avoidance, emergency braking, parking assistance, adaptive cruise control, lane keep assistance, lane departure warning, or traffic jam and queuing assistant, unless any such system alone or in combination with other systems enables the vehicle on which the technology is installed to drive without the active control or monitoring by a human operator.

(2) It is the intent of the Legislature to encourage the safe development, testing, and operation of motor vehicles with autonomous technology on the public roads of the state. The Legislature finds that the state does not prohibit or specifically regulate the testing or operation of autonomous technology in motor vehicles on public roads.

Section 2. Subsection (89) is added to section 316.003, Florida Statutes, to read:

316.003 Definitions.—The following words and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings respectively

ascribed to them in this section, except where the context otherwise requires:

(89) AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE.—Any vehicle equipped with autonomous technology. The term "autonomous technology" means technology installed on a motor vehicle that has the capability to drive the vehicle on which the technology is installed without the active control or monitoring by a human operator. The term excludes a motor vehicle enabled with active safety systems or driver assistance systems, including, without limitation, a system to provide electronic blind spot assistance, crash avoidance, emergency braking, parking assistance, adaptive cruise control, lane keep assistance, lane departure warning, or traffic jam and queuing assistant, unless any such system alone or in combination with other systems enables the vehicle on which the technology is installed to drive without the active control or monitoring by a human operator.

Section 3. Section 316.85, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

316.85 Autonomous vehicles; operation.—

(1) A person who possesses a valid driver license may operate an autonomous vehicle in autonomous mode.

(2) For purposes of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, a person shall be deemed to be the operator of an autonomous vehicle operating in autonomous mode when the person causes the vehicle's autonomous technology to engage, regardless of whether the person is physically present in the vehicle while the vehicle is operating in autonomous mode.

Section 4. Section 319.145, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

319.145 Autonomous vehicles.—

(1) An autonomous vehicle registered in this state must continue to meet federal standards and regulations for a motor vehicle. The vehicle shall:

(a) Have a means to engage and disengage the autonomous technology which is easily accessible to the operator.

(b) Have a means, inside the vehicle, to visually indicate when the vehicle is operating in autonomous mode.

(c) Have a means to alert the operator of the vehicle if a technology failure affecting the ability of the vehicle to safely operate autonomously is detected while the vehicle is operating autonomously in order to indicate to the operator to take control of the vehicle.

(d) Be capable of being operated in compliance with the applicable traffic and motor vehicle laws of this state.

(2) Federal regulations promulgated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shall supersede this section when found to be in conflict with this section.

Section 5. (1) Vehicles equipped with autonomous technology may be operated on roads in this state by employees, contractors, or other persons designated by manufacturers of autonomous technology for the purpose of testing the technology. For testing purposes, a human operator shall be present in the autonomous vehicle such that he or she has the ability to monitor the vehicle's performance and intervene, if necessary, unless the vehicle is being tested or demonstrated on a closed

course. Prior to the start of testing in this state, the entity performing the testing must submit to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles an instrument of insurance, surety bond, or proof of self-insurance acceptable to the department in the amount of $5 million.

(2) The original manufacturer of a vehicle converted by a third party into an autonomous vehicle shall not be liable in, and shall have a defense to and be dismissed from, any legal action brought against the original manufacturer by any person injured due to an alleged vehicle defect caused by the conversion of the vehicle, or by equipment installed by the converter, unless the alleged defect was present in the vehicle as originally manufactured.

(3) By February 12, 2014, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives recommending additional legislative or regulatory action that may be required for the safe testing and operation of motor vehicles equipped with autonomous technology.

Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.