

⋮ LIGHTHOUSE ⋮

FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

June 6, 2024

Terra Curtis, Director
Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3214

Re: Joint Comments in Support of Draft Resolution TL-19150

Dear Director Curtis:

This comment letter is being submitted by the below-signed 18 leaders who represent the interests of regional, statewide and national nonprofit organizations that advocate for the 4 million people in California who have a disability and the millions more who love them.

We are united in support of the expanded availability of Waymo's AV ridehail service, as affirmed by Draft Resolution TL-19150.

Earlier this year, we strongly supported the approval of Waymo's Advice Letter 0002 and appreciate the opportunity to have participated in the process that culminated in the March 1, 2024 approval by the Commission's Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED). We ask that the approval be validated by the Commission with the unanimous approval of the Draft Resolution at the upcoming Commission meeting on June 20, 2024.

The Commission's action to approve the Draft Resolution would have far-reaching positive implications for people with disabilities. Our collective organizations advocate for economic and social improvements in independence, accessibility, and quality of life.

Many of the signatories on this letter have lived experiences with a disability and take pride in our ability to navigate our lives as such. We're also committed to advancing equity and independence. We believe that affirming CPED's prior approval of the commercial use of Waymo's autonomous vehicles throughout the Bay Area and Los Angeles will exponentially increase accessibility and mobility options for community members who live with disabilities.

Many of us have members who are already riding with Waymo One in San Francisco and Los Angeles. They have remarked that the independence, privacy and convenience are unique hallmarks of only fully autonomous rides.

As one signatory shared earlier this year in a response submitted in support of Waymo's Advice Letter 0002, "autonomous vehicles offer solutions to current transportation priorities facing the state of California, including improved safety, environmental quality, and expanded transportation options for our citizens with disabilities. By providing an affordable and convenient alternative to move around the state, transportation can much more quickly become a service for a diverse set of passengers in an equitable fashion."

We encourage the CPUC to continue to allow for Waymo's expansion, as doing so will allow for safe and regulated deployment of autonomous vehicles on our streets.

Sincerely,

[Sharon L. Giovinazzo](#)

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Additional Signatories:

Tim Elder, President, National Federation of the Blind of California
Scott Thornhill, Executive Director, American Council of the Blind
Armando Contreras, CEO, United Cerebral Palsy
Anni Chung, President and CEO, Self-Help for the Elderly
Theo Braddy, Executive Director, National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)
Tony Zucker, Board Chair, Epilepsy Foundation of Northern California
Rudy A. Contreras, CEO, California Resource Services For Independent Living (formerly Southern California Resource Services for Independent Living)
Arash Bayatmakou, Executive Director, NorCal SCI
Katelyn Quintero, State Director, California Best Buddies International
Lana Nieves, Executive Director, Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco
Donald Overton, Executive Director, Blinded Veterans Association
Fernando Antonio Gomez, Co-Founder and Chair, Integrated Community Collaborative
Elizabeth Barrios Gomez, Co-Founder, Integrated Community Collaborative
Shannon Sparling Abdul-Wahab, CEO, Hundley Foundation
Chris Spencer, Director, National MS Society
Karae Lisle, CEO, Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired