Calif. Regulations for Self-Driving Vehicles Nearing Passage

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The California Senate passed a bill on Monday, May 21, that would " establish safety and performance standards" for operating autonomous (driverless) vehicles on the state's public roads. The bill will now be considered by the State Assembly.

To date, California has not authorized the use of autonomous vehicles on the state's public roads even though companies like Google had already begun privately testing the technology in the state.

State Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Pacoima, introduced the bill — Senate Bill 1298 —on March 1 during a press conference at the state's Capitol, where he said, "I imagine a lot of people think a self-driving car as science fiction or something out of the *Jetsons*, but this may not be something that happens for a long time. But we're living in an era of Moore's Law, where every two years we double our computer processing speeds. And what it's done is it's allowed us to demonstrate exponential improvements to the areas of advanced technology, including the ability to use technology to make self-driving cars a reality sooner rather than later."

If SB 1298 is passed by the California Assembly, it would still need to be approved by Gov. Jerry Brown before becoming law.

California would become the second state with laws on the books for regulating the use of autonomous vehicles.

Nevada became the first when it approved regulations for the testing of autonomous vehicles in February. The first autonomous vehicle testing license in Nevada was issued to Google earlier this month.

"Through the use of computers, sensors and other systems, an autonomous vehicle can analyze the driving environment more quickly and accurately and can operate the vehicle more safely. Padilla said in a statement issued from the Capitol on Monday. "Autonomous vehicles have the potential to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and injuries."

http://www.govtech.com/transportation/California-Regulations-for-Self-Driving-Vehicles-Closer-to-Passage.html