



**SB 1313 – Safe Roads Act**

*Keeping our roads safe and enforcing accountability.*

**SUMMARY**

SB 1313 prohibits the use and sale of manufactured and homemade devices used to interfere with driver monitoring safety technology. By curbing the misuse of this technology, this bill takes an important step in supporting transportation safety and ensuring that law enforcement has the tools to keep our roads safe.

**BACKGROUND**

All vehicles with active driving assistance systems (ADAS) require continuous driving supervision in all driving environments. A growing number of vehicles have ADAS, with 34% of 2020 model-year vehicles equipped with them.<sup>1</sup> Some examples of ADAS include adaptive cruise control, lane keeping assistance, and automatic emergency braking.<sup>2</sup> It is predicted that by 2043, 95% of all registered vehicles in the U.S. will be equipped with most ADAS.<sup>3</sup>

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), driver assistance technology can reduce traffic collisions. The Insurance Institute of Highway Safety found that vehicles with automatic emergency braking showed a 56% reduction in crashes with injuries compared to vehicles without the technology. New research estimates that available ADAS technologies could prevent approximately 37 million crashes, 14 million injuries, and nearly 250,000 deaths over the next 30 years.<sup>4</sup>

Many vehicles are also equipped with driving monitoring systems (DMS), designed to prevent accidents. Every 24 seconds, a human life is lost in traffic, with the majority of accidents caused by human error – drivers that are distracted or fatigued. Car manufacturers have responded by deploying DMS, which can detect driver impairment and enable appropriate interventions. These systems include cameras to monitor the driver’s eyes, head position, and sensors to detect that hands are kept on the steering wheel.

**THE PROBLEM**

Dishearteningly, some drivers deceive safety systems through the misuse and abuse of this technology. Entire online marketplaces exist dedicated to selling devices, sometimes referred to as "nag reduction devices," designed to hug the steering wheel and apply pressure to simulate a driver's hands on the wheel.<sup>5</sup> There are dozens of driver-operated online forums offering guidance on crafting your own "homemade" techniques to deceive safety systems, such as using weighted magnets, water bottles, hair clips, and various other items attached to a steering wheel.<sup>6</sup>

Vehicles equipped with ADAS are not designed to operate independently of the human driver. **There is nothing in California law that allows law enforcement to stop or cite a driver who has tampered with a vehicle's safety features, allowing them to drive hands-free or otherwise disengage from driving.** This results in dangerous inattentiveness while operating a vehicle and eliminates a vehicle's safety capabilities, endangering pedestrians and motorists.

Additionally, there are no laws prohibiting the sale or circulation of these devices. Despite efforts from NHTSA to end the marketing, sale, and distribution of these devices in 2018, online retailers continue to sell and offer them, promoting a dangerous trend.<sup>7</sup>

**THE SOLUTION**

SB 1313 prohibits a person from using, buying, possessing, manufacturing, selling, or otherwise distributing a device that is designed for neutralizing, disabling, or otherwise interfering with a safety monitoring system. A violation would result in an infraction under the Vehicle Code.

As active driving assistance technology becomes increasingly standard in vehicles, California’s traffic laws must adapt to the ever-evolving technological landscape to keep our roads safe and free from distracted drivers.

<sup>1</sup> [Active Driving Assistance System Performance](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Guide to Cars With Advanced Safety Systems](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Predicted availability and prevalence of safety features on registered vehicles](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Your Auto’s Safety Net: The Lifesaving Potential of Driving Assistance Tech](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Teslaunch, Vooor](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Ioniq Forum, Bronco Forum](#)

<sup>7</sup> [CONSUMER ADVISORY: NHTSA Deems ‘Autopilot Buddy’ Product Unsafe](#)

## **SUPPORT**

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- Alliance for Automotive Innovation  
(sponsor)
- Tesla

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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