

Akin

Autonomous Akin



February 2024

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Our newsletter reflects the focus of Akin’s cross-practice autonomous systems and advanced mobility team on developments in the regulatory, policy, trade, intellectual property, and cybersecurity and privacy spaces. Autonomous Akin brings you the latest news and developments so that you can keep a pulse on what is happening in government and industry that is impactful for your business. For our new readers, you can subscribe to future issues of this newsletter [here](#). Thank you!

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Akin Spotlight

FAA Reauthorization Watch: Provisions of Note for UAS and AAM Companies in the Senate Bill

On February 8, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation passed a bill that would fund the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for the next five years. This marks the first good progress on FAA Reauthorization since the House of Representatives passed its own version last July. The Senate version of the bill was stalled in Committee, held up by a series of disagreements among Senators on issues affecting pilots, including training requirements and a mandatory retirement age. When no progress was made by the end of last year, Congress was forced to pass a second short-term extension bill to fund the agency through March 8, 2024.

[Read the Article](#)

Walmart Announces Dallas Drone Deliveries Covering Millions - *Transport Topics*

“Walmart will have the ability to make drone deliveries with its partners Wing and Zipline to 75% of Dallas-Fort Worth by the end of this year, Walmart CEO Doug McMillon said Jan. 9. Walmart’s service area will cover 1.8 million households with deliveries made within a 30-minute window. Of the 120,000 items in a Supercenter, 75% meet the size and weight requirements for drone delivery.”

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Mass General Brigham Plans to Use Drones to Deliver Medical Supplies to Patients - *NBC Boston*

“Mass General Brigham patients could soon start seeing medical supplies delivered to their doorstep—by drone. The state’s largest healthcare system is partnering with Canadian drone company Draganfly Inc. to send medical equipment to patients in MGB’s home hospital program.”

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Alphabet’s Wing Supersizes Delivery Drones to Tow Big Orders - *Tech Crunch*

“Wing, the drone-powered delivery company operated by Alphabet, intends to introduce a larger craft capable of towing heavier packages to customers. The news comes on the heels of Walmart’s decision to expand its drone deliveries in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, so it’s no wonder Wing is working to upgrade its stock; the outfit is one of the two firms facilitating Walmart’s drone delivery effort, alongside Zipline . . . Wing’s larger drones, however, will handle “up to 5 pounds in a standard cardboard box,” the company told TechCrunch. They await approval from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration.”

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A Drone the Size of a Slice of Bread May Allow a Glimpse Inside One of the World’s Most Dangerous Places - *The Independent*

“A drone almost the size of a slice of bread is Japan’s newest hope to get clearer footage of one of the reactors inside the tsunami-hit Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant where hundreds of tons of damaged fuel remain almost 13 years after the disaster . . . The plant’s operating company, Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, unveiled Tuesday small drones they want to use to gather more data from parts of one of the reactors previously inaccessible.”

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Hyundai Says its Four-Passenger Evtol Will Be Ready For 2028 - *The Verge*

“Supernal, the automaker’s eVTOL division, says its S-A2 concept can cruise at 120mph and reach an altitude of 1,500 feet. It packs enough battery capacity for the type of 25- to 40-mile trips that helicopters commonly conduct between downtowns and airports for wealthy business types.”

[Read the Article](#)

NASA, Joby Partner to Research Air Taxi Integration Across US Airports - *Silicon Valley Business Journal*

“NASA Ames Research Center and Joby Aero Inc. said that through a partnership both organization’s researchers are looking at ways of advancing the integration of next-generation aircraft into airports.”

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Air Taxi Charging Infrastructure Coming to 3 States in Archer, Joby Deals - *Smart Cities Dive*

“Air taxi developers Archer Aviation and Joby Aviation separately announced deals today to install charging infrastructure for electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft. Archer said it is focused on establishing sites in the Los Angeles and New York City metropolitan areas, Northern California and South Florida, while Joby will electrify existing infrastructure at locations in New York and Southern California. Both eVTOL manufacturers will collaborate with Atlantic Aviation, an aviation services company working with Beta Technologies, which is building out a nationwide charging network with more than 55 sites in the permitting process or under construction.”

[Read the Article](#)

Joby Aviation Electric Air Taxi Charger Coming to John Wayne Airport - *Santa Cruz Sentinel*

“Joby Aviation is bringing its first commercial air taxi charging system to John Wayne Airport as it gets closer to launching electric air taxi services to Southern California. Santa Cruz-based Joby, which is developing electric air taxis for commercial passenger service, said the installation is part of Clay Lacy Aviation’s \$100 million redevelopment of its fixed-based operator terminal at the airport. The charger should be done by mid-2025.”

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NASA and Archer Partner on Next-Gen Battery Tech for Electric Aircraft - *Axios*

“Air taxi developer Archer Aviation is collaborating with NASA on advanced battery technology, it announced Monday. The future of advanced air mobility, including electric planes and vertical takeoff and landing aircraft (eVTOLs) like Archer’s Midnight aircraft, will require more powerful and efficient batteries. The collaboration will kick off with a project focused on developing high-performance battery cells for electric aircraft, and potentially spacecraft.”

[Read the Article](#)

Autonomy and Electric Vehicles



Gatik Autonomous Trucks Know the Road via Goodyear’s Smart Tires - *Forbes*

“Goodyear and Gatik today announced the expansion of this partnership, which they say is the AV industry’s first successful integration of tire intelligence technology into an autonomous driving system.”

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Charging Software Startup Braves EV Winter With Fresh Funding - *Bloomberg*

“It may not seem like a great time to be in the EV charging business. Electric-vehicle sales growth is slowing, and public money for charging is merely trickling out when the industry could use a flood of funds. But investor enthusiasm isn’t waning.”

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Driverless Truck Companies Plan to Remove Human Copilots This Year - *The Virginian-Pilot*

“After years of testing, Aurora Innovation Inc., Kodiak Robotics Inc. and Gatik AI Inc. expect to remove safety drivers from trucks that are being guided by software and an array of sensors including cameras, radar and lidar, which sends pulses of light that bounces off objects. The companies have already hauled cargo for big names such as Walmart Inc., Kroger Co., FedEx Corp. and Tyson Foods Inc.”

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Consumers Want More Advanced, Autonomous Safety Features, Survey Says - *Repairer Driven News*

“The Autonomous Vehicles: Consumer Trends and Attitudes Survey found that advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) are consumers’ top priority when choosing their next car. Ghost Autonomy, an autonomous driving software company, surveyed 1,200 participants across diverse age groups, income levels and geographical regions for the survey. Eighty

percent of respondents said safety systems played a pivotal role in their choice of vehicle and 61% said they'd accelerate their next purchase for breakthrough safety technology.”

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Kodiak Robotics Reveals its Best Shot at Making Self-Driving Trucks a Business - *Tech Crunch*

“The semi-truck’s redundant features, which were developed and designed by Kodiak and built by a contract manufacturer, including three brake actuators on its system steering and two steering systems as well as a backup power system for all of the computers, sensors, actuators and other electrical systems on the truck.”

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Akin Thought Leadership



[FAA Reauthorization Watch: Provisions of Note for UAS and AAM Companies in the Senate Bill](#) (February 13, 2024)

[Hot Issues in 2024 for TMT Companies](#) (February 6, 2024)

[Three New UK Laws Impacting Autonomous Vehicles, Digital Markets and Personal Data](#) (November 30, 2023)

[CPPA Takes Aim at Connected Cars in First-Ever Review](#) (August 23, 2023)

[Congress Takes a Step Forward on Outbound Investment](#) (July 27, 2023)

[Akin’s Mid-Year TMT Report Provides Important Updates on Regulatory and Policy Developments for TMT Leaders](#) (May 25, 2023)

[Autonomous Systems & Advanced Mobility: 2023 Trends & Predictions](#) (May 5, 2023)

[Kayo Sustainable Infrastructure Webinar Recording](#) - Passcode: Fm%!X07T (April 19, 2023)

Events



IAM Live: Auto IP USA

May 1-2, 2024

Detroit, MI

Akin partner [Rubén Muñoz](#) will moderate a panel titled "Reassessing your IP strategy".

[AUVSI XPONENTIAL 2024](#)

April 22-25, 2024
San Diego, CA

XPONENTIAL is a yearly gathering of global leaders and end users in the uncrewed systems and robotics industry. Founded on the belief that cross-pollination drives innovation, it features opportunities to connect and problem-solve with experts across markets and domains.

Law-Tech Connect AUVSI Workshop

April 22, 2024
San Diego, CA

The Sky is Not the Limit: Space Is!

Akin partner [Jennifer Richter](#) will be a distinguished speaker on this panel. Join this group of space and spectrum experts as they explain the parallel universe of laws, regulations, governing bodies, frameworks, authorities and policies that govern what happens in space that affects aviation operations in the sky and on the ground.

Surf & Turf: Serving Up Autonomous Regulations

Akin partner [Hyongsoon Kim](#) will serve as the moderator for this panel. This panel of attorneys and key industry partners will provide an overview of the legal regimes applicable to autonomous land and sea and contrast them with those for aircraft.

Protection from Mayhem

Akin partner [Michelle Reed](#) will serve as the moderator for this panel. Join this group of experts as they address a range of topics that can keep your business, organization or endeavor legally compliant and protect you from mayhem.

Questions?

If you have any questions please contact your regular Akin lawyer or advisors or:



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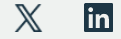


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