SELF-DRIVING CARS
By James Collins

Just to go on record as to my position on the matter I plan to buy a self-driving car as soon as they reach commercial sales and can travel up to 65 mph. I do not want to waste my life sitting in a very slow-moving 25 mile an hour car. I plan to sit in the backseat. I will tell the machine where I want to go while I sit down, read a newspaper or watch TV and enjoy the ride.

Presently, there are dozens of self-driving cars made by different manufacturers on the roads. They are tracking the accident rate and it is quite low. The most common accident is when the car, stopped in traffic, is rear-ended by a car driven by some person not paying attention. They may be texting.

The reason I have decided to buy a self-driving car is that I got frustrated on my plans to make my fifth trip to Ireland. I was going to tour Ireland and learned that once you reach the age of 75 you can neither rent nor drive a car in Ireland. Self-driving car would appear to work itself around that series of obstructions, if a relative can rent me a vehicle.

There are a number of positives arising from the self-driving car phenomena. One of the most likely and the one to save the greatest number of lives is that drunks can now get into the car, sit in the backseat, and their driving is not impaired by drinking.
The other group that will benefit is the elderly. I am talking about the group who is not impaired but are restricted by age, in the various states, from having a valid license. I hope that the self-driving car removes the concerns associated with elderly drivers. That should prove itself out in the actual experience.

A group that will suffer is the taxi industry, which is having a big fight with Uber presently. Both of these groups will have no reason to have a driver if a company can send out self-driving cars to pick up the passengers, drop them at their location and then return to base. The problem is the potential theft of the vehicle. At present, there appears to be no way of solving this concern but I am sure security will work out something.

Another group that will contest the self-driving car phenomenon is the Teamsters Union. They control all the truck drivers in the United States and self-driving trucks are a major concern. The Teamsters do not want to lose drivers. A similar problem was handled in the past by other unions employing a backup mandate. Elevator operators always worked the initial manual elevators. When the machines became automatic, the unions managed to get laws passed that required an operator be in each car if It had passengers and this went on for about 25 years.

At present, there are many automatic elevators and very few elevator operators. This appears to be the future for self-driving-trucks. However, it is very easy to hijack a truck if it is self-driven. With no operator present, the hijackers only need to pull in front of the truck with their car and slow it down until the truck stops. The truck is not permitted to get too close to a car in front and will, by its very nature, slow down and stop. Then the hijacker can get out of their car and take possession of the truck. There is nobody there to stop them. This will be of great concern to the trucking industry but I am sure they will work it out. They will probably keep the truck drivers on board no matter what as

they did with the elevator operators.

There are hundreds and hundreds of variations that might occur. The only thing for sure is that the people that will make money on the self-driving cars are the lawyers. Everything associated with this will generate mass confusion. Each state will have its own laws and the government will have theirs. In every state people, will just be suing anything and everybody. Assume an action occurs with a 10-year-old in the car and he is hit from behind. It was not his fault. Who has the insurance? If someone is hurt in the accident, will a 10-year-old be sued? I don't know. That is up to wiser people and future generations and the legal system to work out. However, I warn them you are going to have problems.

THE END