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May 14, 2020

Mayor London N. Breed  
Tomás Aragón, MD, DrPH, San Francisco Health Officer  
San Francisco City Hall  
San Francisco, CA 94102

RE: Further Essential Service Considerations

Dear Mayor London N. Breed, Officer Aragón,

On behalf of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and our hundreds of members from varying industries, we thank you for the leadership in continuing to take steps to flatten the COVID-19 curve. We recognize that the department's health measures, along with shelter in place orders have saved our City from experiencing an even deeper public health crisis. Our members are committed to undertaking all necessary steps in order to ensure the health and safety of workers.

While we are entering phase two of our economic reopening, we must keep in mind the many vulnerable populations who will be unable to participate in masked to-go or shopping. With this in mind, we respectfully urge you to please consider the inclusion of Research and Development for Autonomous Vehicle Transportation of Groceries, Food and Essential Services Delivery as an essential business.

Research and development in the transportation of groceries, food and other essential services plays a critical role in the mitigation measures of COVID-19, and allows residents to comply with lifesaving shelter in place orders. Moreover, such efforts support local restaurants and grocery stores that depend on food delivery, often as their main source of income during the quarantine. Presently, many autonomous vehicle (AV) companies are operating in a limited capacity under existing health orders to provide food delivery to low-income, seniors, and other vulnerable populations on behalf of food banks, religious organizations, and community service enterprises.

Defining AV Research and Development related to delivering groceries, food and essential services as an essential business and allowing its operation in the upcoming economic reopening phases would allow companies to research how to better provide these resources to San Francisco residents.

We respectfully ask that the above consideration be included among the shelter in-place orders as an essential business. Thank you for your service and leadership during these trying times, we stand together with you in keeping San Francisco the resilient city that it always has been.

Respectfully,

Rodney Fong  
President & CEO  
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce