



Dear Representative:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups, and insurance companies working together to advance safe drivers and roads users, safe vehicles and safe roadways, urges you to **support House Bill (HB) 258** to upgrade Kentucky's distracted driving law and prevent deaths, injuries and related costs.

Wireless communication device technology has developed from cellphones to smart phones, and the range of electronic communication platforms has significantly broadened to include apps, cameras, social media, gaming, etc.

Laws curbing driver distraction must be updated to keep pace with the technology and ensuing distraction.

A 2021 [report](#), *Using Electronic Devices While Driving: Legislations and Enforcement Implications*, by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) comprehensively reviewed the issue of distracted driving and state distracted driving laws. The report identifies key components in a model distracted driving law including:

- **provisions that prohibit hand held use of devices and the use of “an electronic device to stream, record, or broadcast video.** This includes when the device is used hands free (mounted, affixed, or resting somewhere in the vehicle).” Kentucky’s law should be upgraded to add these provisions.
- **restrictions to “be in effect at all times when the vehicle is traveling on public roads, this includes at stop lights and when temporarily slowed or stopped in traffic.”** While Kentucky’s current law restricts the prohibition on device use to when the vehicle is in motion, it should be amended to explicitly ban use when stopped in traffic or at a light.
- **language banning texting (whether the device is hand held or hands free) and providing “more stringent restrictions for drivers under 18 years of age.”** Kentucky’s law already includes and should retain these provisions.

HB 258 revises existing law to address all of these components and will help to improve safety on Kentucky roads.

Public Support:

- [Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Inc., January 19-22, 2022](#), Kentuckians expressed the following opinions:
 - **81% support requiring** drivers to use hands-free, voice command technology to make calls and communicate.
 - **88% would likely obey** a hands-free law (very likely 73%, somewhat likely 15%).

- **64% believe** that a properly enforced hands-free law **would decrease crashes.**
- ***ENGINE INSIGHTS*** using the *CARAVAN Survey, December 15-19, 2021*, national respondents expressed the following:
 - **98% are concerned about distracted driving with 84% “extremely” or “very” concerned.”**
 - Concern about distracted driving is **widespread among respondents by age, generation, region, political party, and type of community.**
 - **A strong majority agrees that not enough is being done to reduce dangerous behavior on our roadways.** Notably, this response was fairly consistent across political party (66 percent of Republicans, 64 percent of Democrats, and 73 percent of Independents).

794 people were killed on Kentucky roads in 2021 according to the Kentucky Office of Highway Safety.

HB 258 is a timely response to address public concerns about deadly distracted driving. We urge you to support and co-sponsor HB 258 to curb distracted driving and protect Kentuckians and visitors on state roads.