

The Honorable Doug Green, Chairman

Ohio House of Representatives Transportation Committee

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Chairman Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, members of the Ohio House Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 468 which would alter the use of cell phones while driving. As a person who regularly commuted to work by bicycle before working from home during the coronavirus pandemic, I can attest the fact that over 50% of the drivers are interacting with phones when I look over. This is a dangerous distraction and has proven deadly too many times. I consider myself to be an advocate for bike and pedestrian safety and as such, I am in support of stricter laws regarding cell phone use while driving.

I am also an advocate for people living with Type 1 diabetes, like my son who turns 16 today! You may be familiar with Type 1 diabetes as juvenile diabetes since historically people have been diagnosed with it in childhood. However, over a third of new diagnoses are in adults over 30, there is no cure for this disease, and 75% of people living with it are adults. I wanted to call attention to the fact that phones are used as medical devices for a growing number of people. My son wears a continuous glucose monitor, a sensor that measures his blood sugar every five minutes and sends a reading to his phone. It also alerts him if his blood sugar is too low (the biggest danger for people with Type 1 diabetes), too high, or if his device is malfunctioning. In our case, his phone also controls insulin delivery through his insulin pump using an app. None of this is to suggest that people should be using their phones for medical purposes while driving...I would just like to raise awareness of the fact that there are important alarms that may cause a person to glance at a phone to determine the best course of action. Ideally, they would pull over to do this, but I could imagine a case with extenuating circumstances where they needed to glance at the alert on the phone. This came to my attention when another mom, Erica Potter, brought this issue to me when her friend in Georgia was ticketed for looking at her phone when she got an urgent low alert from her son's continuous glucose monitor. The state of Georgia has recognized the role of medical devices by incorporating an exemption for prescribed medical devices used via phone. Continuous glucose monitors are prescription devices. This is likely the best way to avoid people using this exemption as an excuse. Ms. Potter and I approached Rep. Lightbody about this and she was wonderful in listening to our stories. She has requested an amendment to mirror the law in Georgia, and I support this amendment. I have also spoken with Senator Kunze who has a similar bill the Ohio Senate and she graciously agreed to share my concerns with others involved.

I am happy to answer any questions about this issue to the best of my ability. Thank you for your consideration.

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