

## H.B. 468 Proponent Testimony

Erin Synk, Yay Bikes!

House Transportation and Public Safety Committee

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Chair Green, Vice-Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and Members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on behalf of Yay Bikes! on H.B. 468, distracted driving legislation.

Yay Bikes! is a Central Ohio-based non-profit that helps people safely and comfortably ride bicycles for transportation and recreation by teaching riders how to safely and predictably ride on roads and working to improve the road conditions for vulnerable users such as bicyclists and pedestrians. On behalf of our members, we are proud to strongly support H.B. 468.

Distracted driving is a widespread and dangerous problem in Ohio with serious and too often fatal consequences. As smart phone use continues to become more prevalent, Ohio has experienced an increase in traffic crashes and fatalities. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) reported a 21 percent increase in crashes and a 28 percent increase in fatalities from 2013-2017 in their region. According to the CDC, distracting driving accounts for over 15 percent of motor vehicle injuries and nearly 10 percent of motor vehicle deaths in the United States. Although these figures are alarming, many professionals believe distracting driving related crashes are drastically under reported.

At Yay Bikes!, improving the safety of our roadways is of paramount importance because we know the disproportionate impact it has on vulnerable road users. In Central Ohio, pedestrians and bicyclists are 20.3 and 9.5 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a crash, respectively.

Every Ohioan, whether they're walking, biking, or driving a car, deserves to come home safely at the end of the day. Unfortunately, it only takes a moment of inattention to drastically alter or end a life. H.B. 468 will save lives on Ohio's roads and send a strong message that the responsibility of piloting a motor vehicle requires one's full attention. On behalf of Yay Bikes!, I applaud your efforts to curb distracted driving and protect all road users, and urge your favorable consideration of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Synk

Yay Bikes! Board Member