



LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
PUBLIC SAFETY AND
VETERANS AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Organization Representing: _____

Testifying on Bill Number: _____

Testimony: _____ Verbal _____ Written _____ Both

Testifying As: _____ Proponent _____ Opponent _____ Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist? _____ Yes _____ No

Special Requests: _____

To: Members of the Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee

Chair: Nathan H. Manning, Chair

To Chair Manning and members of the Local Government, Public Safety and Veteran Affairs Committee:

I am writing to express Bike Cleveland's support for SB 285, a bill to revise the laws to make distracted driving a primary offense.

Bike Cleveland is Northeast Ohio's bicycle advocacy organization. Our mission is to create a region that is sustainable, connected, healthy, and vibrant by promoting bicycling and advocating for safe and equitable transportation for all. We represent over 1,000 dues paying members who value our work for safe streets for people biking and walking.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 10% of fatal crashes and 15% of serious injury crashes in the US in 2015 were distraction related. That is 3,477 people killed and an estimated additional 391,000 injured in crashes involving distracted drivers. While there is widespread understanding that distracted driving is bad (a recent AAA survey found that over 80% of people find texting or emailing while driving a serious threat to safety), many people still engage in those behaviors (the same survey found that over 40% of drivers had read an email or text within the last 30 days). Sharing the road is much harder when people are not looking at the road. Effective distracted driving laws and enforcement are key to discouraging this dangerous behavior.

A University of Alabama Study found that banning all handheld devices while driving work, reducing traffic deaths for adults ages 22 to 64. In total distract driving laws can reduce traffic deaths by 11%.

47 states plus Washington D.C. ban text messaging for all drivers. All but four states, including Ohio, have primary enforcement for driving while distracted. As an organization that represents the most vulnerable road users, people biking and walking, I encourage you to support SB 285 to improve safety and save lives on Ohio's roadways.

Thank you for allowing me to submit proponent testimony for SB 285.

Jacob VanSickle, Executive Director
Bike Cleveland
3000 Bridge Ave., Suite 1
Cleveland, OH 44113