

On behalf of The Risk Institute, I am writing this letter of support for Ohio SB285. The Risk Institute, has for the past few years, been working at the forefront of research to curb Distracted Driving in Ohio. As we are well aware, Distracted Driving has contributed to an ever increasing number of fatalities in the State of Ohio. In fact, Ohio fatalities have risen five of the past six years even as our vehicles are getting safer. The proliferation of smart phones, in our opinion, is a leading contributor to driver distraction. In fact, our research has shown that phone distractions occur in many forms. Those include texting, emails, games, GPS directions and a use that caused us a significant amount of concern, watching movies. As technology expands distractions will continue to grow. We must, however, continue to stay vigilant and work to curb Distracted Driving. We believe that SB285 is a very important step toward that goal.

SB285 provides:

- Prohibits drivers from having physical contact with their phones and or other wireless devices while driving and or stopped in traffic.
- Drivers must use voice commands or single touch activation.
- Allows exceptions for emergency calls
- Allows primary enforcement.

It is our opinion that a primary hands free law will save Ohio lives.... Other states, that have enacted primary hands free laws ,have seen reductions in traffic deaths. In fact, several states that have passed Hands free legislation (measured two years post enactment) have seen fatalities decrease between 20% and 45%.

As a citizen of Ohio and as Executive Director of The Risk Institute, we stand in favor of the provisions of SB285. **Together we can "Put the Brakes on Distracted Driving"**.

Best, Phil

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