



LABORERS' DISTRICT COUNCIL OF OHIO

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Laborers' International Union of North America–AFL-CIO
Ohio State Building & Construction Trades Council
Ohio AFL-CIO



Ralph E. Cole
*Business Manager/
Secretary Treasurer*

May 26, 2020

Dear Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Marharath and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety, and Veterans Affairs Committee:

On behalf of the 20,000 working men and women that are part of the Ohio Laborers District Council (OLDC) I would like to offer our support of Senate Bill 285. Many of our members are seen working on Ohio's heavy highway construction zones, this puts our members near fast moving cars and their lives at risk daily. The members of the OLDC build Ohio's infrastructure and the safety of our workers is our highest priority. Distracted driving is something that we all must take an active role in avoiding, the danger that the use of wireless devices behind the wheel pose to our members who work in close proximity requires tougher consequences and strong deterrents that are provided in SB 285.

Senate Bill 285 will make driving while handling or manipulating any electronic wireless device a primary offense. This includes, but is not limited to writing, sending, or reading text-based communications; watching or recording videos; taking photos or looking at images; live streaming; using applications; entering information into G-P-S navigation programs; dialing phone numbers; holding a device for a phone call. The bill will also elevate penalties for vehicular harm that is both aggravated serious physical harm and which causes injury but not serious physical harm to a third-degree felony and a first-degree misdemeanor.

We need to get drivers to put down their phones so that people stop getting hurt. According to the Ohio State Highway Patrol, so far in 2020 there have been 3,331 distracted driving violations which is already more than all of 2019 and we can expect that number to rise as personal wireless devices continue to be part of our daily lives.

It is clear that the strong deterrents in SB 285 are needed to protect Ohioans and the men and women that are building Ohio's infrastructure. The men and women who make up the Ohio Laborers District Council thank Senators O'Brien and Kunze for introducing SB 285 and respectfully ask for its quick passage.

Sincerely,



Ralph E. Cole
Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer
Ohio Laborers' District Council