



LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
PUBLIC SAFETY AND
VETERANS AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date 5/27/2020

Name: Colonel Richard Fambro

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Organization Representing: Ohio State Highway Patrol

Testifying on Bill Number: SB 285

Testimony: Verbal Written Both

Testifying As: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist? Yes No

Special Requests: Need televisions set up for video clip



Department of Public Safety

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Thomas J. Stickrath, Director
Colonel Richard S. Fambro, Superintendent



Proponent Testimony in Support of SB 285 **Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee** **Colonel Richard Fambro**

Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 285 which would strengthen Ohio's distracted driving laws.

I have served with the Patrol for over 28 years and have personally witnessed on countless occasions the detrimental effects of distracted driving. We know every time someone takes their focus off the road - even for just a few seconds - they put their lives and the lives of others in danger. Law enforcement officers see the deadly consequences of distracted driving violations on a daily basis. More often than not, these distractions involve the use of an electronic device.

I am going to show you two short video clips as examples of the distracted driving behavior troopers encountered during the course of performing their duties. In the first video, you will see a driver who was stopped after a trooper from the Canton Post witnessed him fail to use his turn signal and commit several lane violations. You will then hear the driver admit to the violations, stating he was distracted by his phone. It was determined the driver was actually playing Pokémon-Go. He goes on to admit this is not the first time he was stopped for distracted driving.

During the second video, you will see a motorist make several lane violations, tailgate another vehicle and travel at speeds in excess of the speed limit. Once stopped by a trooper from the Wapakoneta Post, you will learn the Patrol received a call from other motorists who were concerned as they observed the same driver watching TV and traveling down the roadway. If you look closely, you can see the screen of his device mounted directly in front of him on the windshield. The trooper witnessed the driver watching a football game just prior to the traffic stop.

It's hard to believe someone would play a video game or watch a football game while driving. Distracted driving is unsafe and irresponsible, and in a split second, the consequences can be devastating. That's why it's so important for law enforcement officers to be able to take immediate action when they observe a distracted driver. Primary enforcement of hands-free distracted driving laws has been shown to decrease fatality rates in states that have implemented this type of legislation. This is precisely why SB 285 is needed in Ohio. The bill bans dangerous and deadly behavior and gives law enforcement the tools to deter and enforce its provisions.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and encourage you to support SB 285 which will undoubtedly help to change driving behavior saving countless lives on Ohio's roadways.