

**HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
APRIL 19, 2023**

**SUB HB 33: OPERATING BUDGET
§4511.204
PROPONENT TESTIMONY**

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chairman LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, I'm Sharon Montgomery. I'm here to support the amendment to the new distracted driving law, Section 4511.204(C)(2) on page 2087 of Sub HB 33.

I don't know who proposed this even though I am in regular and frequent communication with many people regarding this new law. I would like to publicly thank whoever it is who caught this need for clarification and proposed it.

The original provision allows a first offender to take a distracted driving safety course instead of being assessed the fine and points this law requires. This amendment clarifies that the class must be **successfully completed** within 90 days of the violation. Both a short deadline for completion and a requirement that offenders show they learned something are crucial to making this a substitute for other penalties.

The original provision did not make clear whether or not taking the class meant that the offense was then counted as a first offense for the purpose of increased penalties for repeat offenses. This amendment makes that important clarification, stating that it **does** count as a first offense.

My personal preference is that this class be an addition to the fine and points for a first offense. I have not been able to find anyone who can assure me we have evidence that the class changes behavior. If it does, then it is a valuable supplement to the fine and points. But, with all the time many of us spend at our computers anyway, I don't think one extra hour at home at the computer is sufficient penalty for a driving behavior that too often has serious and even deadly consequences.

But, while this class remains an option, I strongly support the clarifications in Sub HB 33.

Thank you for hearing my views on this amendment. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Sharon Montgomery
572 Bonnington Way
Gahanna, Ohio 43230
614-475-8588 (landline)
smontgomery77@yahoo.com