

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Scott Oelslager  
Ohio House of Representatives  
77 S. High St., 13th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

**Re: HB 74 (Oelslager, S.) Transportation Budget**

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley, and members of the Ohio House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 74, specifically the provisions related to distracted driving

My name is Cherie Hanna. Kendall Dawn was my youngest child and only daughter. She came into this world on March 22, 1994. Born in Delaware, Ohio. Kendall was a wonderful child always smiling and laughing, wanting to help whenever she could even when it was just unloading the dishwasher, she would jump right in to lend a helping hand.

Kendall continued to be a giver as she got older with her family and friends. Kendall was a great student, straight A's since she was a small child. Kendall had plans to be a pharmacist. She wanted to be in the medical field, it would allow her financially to raise her little girl along with doing good for her community. Kendall was a great mother, sister, granddaughter and daughter. Kendall had dreams and goals, a plan for her path for a bright future. Mother's Day, May 10, 2014 - little did we know our whole world would change when we received a knock at the door.

I open the door there were two policemen standing there. My heart began to pound I felt weak in the knees. I knew in that moment they were going to tell me something that no mother should ever have to hear. I was told that my daughter had been in a car crash. I asked the officers, what hospital is she at? They looked at me with tears in their eyes and told me that Kendall didn't survive her injuries. I just stood there, I didn't scream, I didn't cry, I was so confused for what seemed to be an eternity but seconds later I fell to my knees, sounds coming out of my body I've never heard before. People would describe it as a death cry. In that moment, my heart was broken in two.

People wonder why I don't just move on with my life, it's because I can't bring her back. This is a pain that never goes away. I still cry every day and it's been almost 7 years since the death of my daughter. I've decided to turn my pain into power, hopefully saving somebody else's child, mother, father or their loved ones. By sharing my daughter's story, her death won't be in vain and my granddaughter Karina will see even though we lost her mother that other lives are saved because of her story. I need to leave that legacy for my granddaughter.

My daughter Kendall made a huge mistake when she picked up that phone and started to text. Kendall was a very smart girl, who made a tremendous mistake that took her life. There are no

second chances for her and that's why we must educate and have stiffer penalties. People assume they can handle texting and driving, but numbers don't lie. So, when I feel sadness and I'm in pain and have that overwhelming feeling to just give up, I don't. I make a conscience decision to share my beautiful daughter Kendall's story in hopes that it brings knowledge to someone else's life. I could testify for hours about how special my child was and how much we love her, but I will only share one more thing with you about my daughter. At Kendall's funeral, the supervisor of her school came up to me taking my hand he looked me in my eyes and said I've been a school superintendent for over 25 years and there's a couple of kids that really stand out to me in my time. I just want you to know that your daughter Kendall was one of them. He hugged me and said we lost a great one.

Hands-Free Ohio will save lives. It's time Ohio follows the rest of the country and bans the use of hand-held cell phones and electronics while driving. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and your consideration.

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