

Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Legislative Program Issues Evaluation Form

Issue ID: 17P02-Hands-Free Device use during Driving

Date Submitted to Legislative Committee: 10-18-2016

Issue: Distracted Drivers are a recognized lethal threat to themselves, vehicle occupants, cyclists, and other motorized vehicles or pedestrians, police and road-workers while driving. In fact, DISTRACTION is the Number 1 cause of motor vehicle accidents in the US. (Texting and driving is 6 times more likely to get you in an accident than drunk driving.) Though cell phone conversations/texting, navigation gear data entry, and adjusting 'map' displays, while driving, should be performed only under special circumstances, it is recognized that such events will occur.

To increase safety to the citizens and property of the Commonwealth, the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations Requests Legislative action to make the use of Hands-Free devices MANDATORY.

Background (Previously submitted as 15P01 on 1 Oct 2014): Currently, full restrictions only address young drivers, who are not permitted to text or use a cell phone while driving. Restrictions addressing adult drivers ONLY prohibit TEXTING while driving.

Existing Conditions/Impacts: This initiative aims at prohibiting the use of all hand-interaction devices for adult drivers, unless using in a hands-free mode. No impacts seen in terms of costs. However, saving even one life will have a great, positive impact and will relieve the social burdens resulting from loss of life or injuries.

Preferred Position: Distracted Drivers are a danger to themselves, vehicle occupants, and other vehicles or pedestrians on the road. Legislation should require that cell phone, etc. equipment be hands-free in order to address the MANDATORY USE OF HANDS-FREE EQUIPMENT WHILE DRIVING.

Benefits: Increased safety on the roads. Decreased number of accidents with consequent loss of lives, property, and work productivity. NOTE: Psychological impacts on the individuals affected and social burdens resulting from loss of lives or injuries, are not addressed at this time.

Potential Supporters: (Community leaders, Public/Private Partnership Opportunities, Organizations):

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors'; Fairfax County State Senators and Delegates; Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations (FCFCA) Members, Public safety officials, citizens

Lead Federation Committee: Public Safety

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