

Letters to the Editor

Appeared in the TC Palms on March 1, 2012

Dear Editor,

Regarding AP reporter James L Rosica's article on House Bill 299, which would prohibit texting while driving:

It appears just about everyone supports this, except our leaders who liken it to needless government's intrusion into people's lives.

Why is it illegal to drive while drinking or taking drugs, to not fasten your seat belt, or to go the wrong way down a one-way street?

State Rep. Brad Drake, R-DeFuniak Springs, says people have to be responsible for themselves. I have news for you, Rep, Drake: They aren't. Where does the extra cost come from? Police witness this terrible habit every day.

Two dear friends of mine were rear-ended recently by a texting driver. Both were injured. What if this was children crossing the street at a school crossing? Would he Rep. Drake say the same thing?

The Florida Sheriffs Association supports this legislation. Sheriffs often are first responders to accidents. I believe they are better judges of the seriousness of this bad habit.

Donald Kilgore
Fort Pierce, Florida

Appeared in the Scottsdale Republic on February 16, 2012

Dear Editor,

Some accidents are caused by cell phone users talking or texting on the phone while driving, but that doesn't mean everyone who uses a phone while driving will cause an accident.

Yes, texting while driving can kill people, but so can doing pretty much anything else. Texting is getting easier and easier to do nowadays. Younger people find it easier to text because they've been texting almost their whole lives, unlike older adults who find texting relatively new. Younger people can text faster, while barely having to keep their eyes off the road.

It's ridiculous to outlaw something that is convenient for so many people. Eventually, the older people will get, well, older, and the younger people will take over the roads completely. They will be able to text and not crash.

Alexis Williams
Scottsdale, Arizona

Appeared in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph on January 26, 2012

Dear Editor,

On the subject of cell phone use while driving: Use some common sense! It irritates me that the government has to make laws for us because we refuse to use our brains.

Eating a hamburger doesn't require taking your eyes off the road. Talking on a cell phone does not require taking your eyes off the road. Texting requires taking your eyes off the road in a big way.

I tried it once and by the time I "woke my phone up," created a short text, went to my contacts list, tapped a contact, hit OK, and then hit send, I was lucky the front of my car wasn't in the car's trunk in front of me. If they'd had to brake suddenly, I would have been.

It makes absolutely no sense to try to write a letter while you're driving and that's what you're doing if you text.

Mary Kidd
Bluefield, Virginia

Appeared in the Columbus Dispatch on December 1, 2011

Dear Editor,

I commend *The Dispatch* for its continued support of legislation that would ban texting while driving statewide ("Common sense seems in short supply among lawmakers," Joe Hallett column, Nov. 20; "Send a message," editorial, Sept. 25).

While it would seem obvious that texting behind the wheel is dangerous, an unfortunate number of people still do it. The Pew Research Center reports 34 percent of teens ages 16 and 17 and 47 percent of adults who text admit to texting while driving. Although the AAA Foundation's 2011 Traffic Safety Culture Index finds 94 percent of drivers agree that texting while driving is dangerous, there seems to be a do-as-I-say, not-as-I-do mentality when it comes to texting at the wheel.

This simple law change would send a strong message that texting while driving is simply not acceptable. Thirty-five states already have passed statewide texting bans, and an overwhelming majority of Ohioans support a similar measure here at home.

I urge the Senate to fulfill the will of the people by passing House Bill 99 and banning texting while driving statewide.

State Rep. Nancy Garland
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