

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2154

To amend title 23, United States Code, to reduce injuries and deaths caused by cell phone use and texting while driving, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2015

Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. DESAULNIER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend title 23, United States Code, to reduce injuries and deaths caused by cell phone use and texting while driving, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Distracted Driving
5 Prevention Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. DISTRACTED DRIVING GRANTS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 405(e) of title 23, United
8 States Code, is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1) by striking “in paragraphs
2 (2) and (3)” and inserting “in paragraphs (2), (3),
3 and (4)”;

4 (2) in paragraph (2)(C)—

5 (A) in clause (i) by striking “fine” and in-
6 serting “penalty”; and

7 (B) in clause (ii) by striking “fines” and
8 inserting “penalties”;

9 (3) in paragraph (3)—

10 (A) in subparagraph (B) by striking “of-
11 fense;” and inserting “offense; and”;

12 (B) by striking subparagraph (C);

13 (C) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as
14 subparagraph (C); and

15 (D) in subparagraph (C) (as redesignated
16 by subparagraph (C) of this paragraph)—

17 (i) in clause (i) by striking “fine” and
18 inserting “penalty”; and

19 (ii) in clause (ii) by striking “fines”
20 and inserting “penalties”;

21 (4) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through
22 (9) as paragraphs (5) through (10), respectively;

23 (5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(4) PROHIBITION ON HANDHELD CELL PHONE
2 USE WHILE DRIVING.—A State statute meets the re-
3 quirements set forth in this paragraph if the stat-
4 ute—

5 “(A) prohibits a driver from holding a per-
6 sonal wireless communications device to conduct
7 a telephone call while driving;

8 “(B) allows the use of a hands-free device
9 by a driver, other than a driver who has not at-
10 tained the age of 18 years, for initiating, con-
11 ducting, or receiving a telephone call;

12 “(C) makes violation of the law a primary
13 offense; and

14 “(D) establishes—

15 “(i) a minimum penalty for a first vio-
16 lation of the law; and

17 “(ii) increased penalties for repeat
18 violations.”;

19 (6) in paragraph (5) (as redesignated by para-
20 graph (4) of this subsection) by striking “in para-
21 graphs (2) and (3)” and inserting “in paragraphs
22 (2), (3), and (4)”;

23 (7) in paragraph (10) (as redesignated by para-
24 graph (4) of this subsection)—

1 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B)
 2 through (E) as subparagraphs (C) through (F),
 3 respectively; and

4 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (A)
 5 the following:

6 “(B) PENALTY.—The term ‘penalty’
 7 means—

8 “(i) a fine;

9 “(ii) a number of points to be in-
 10 cluded on a driver’s record; or

11 “(iii) an action taken by a State that
 12 is substantially similar to including points
 13 on a driver’s record.”.

14 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made in sub-
 15 section (a) shall take effect on October 1 of the first fiscal
 16 year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

17 **SEC. 3. RESEARCH PROGRAM.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
 19 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transpor-
 20 tation shall establish a research program to study dis-
 21 tracted driving by motor vehicle drivers.

22 (b) SCOPE.—The program established under sub-
 23 section (a) shall include studies with respect to—

24 (1) driver behavior;

25 (2) vehicle technology; and

1 (3) portable electronic devices that are com-
2 monly brought into motor vehicles.

3 (c) RESEARCH AGREEMENTS.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section,
5 the Secretary may grant research contracts to non-
6 governmental entities to study distracted driving.

7 (2) LIMITATIONS.—The Secretary may not
8 grant a research contract under this section to any
9 person that produces or sells—

10 (A) electronic equipment that is used in
11 motor vehicles;

12 (B) portable electronic equipment com-
13 monly brought into motor vehicles; or

14 (C) motor vehicles.

15 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
16 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to
17 the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
18 of the Senate, the Committee on Energy and Commerce
19 of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on
20 Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Rep-
21 resentatives a report on the results of the program estab-
22 lished under subsection (a).

1 **SEC. 4. FCC REPORT ON DISTRACTED DRIVING TECH-**
2 **NOLOGY.**

3 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
4 of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall
5 submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
6 Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on En-
7 ergy and Commerce of the House of Representatives a re-
8 port that identifies—

9 (1) data the Commission can collect and ana-
10 lyze that will assist in understanding and reducing
11 the problem of distracted driving involving the use of
12 personal wireless communications devices;

13 (2) existing and developing wireless communica-
14 tions technology that may be used to reduce prob-
15 lems associated with distracted driving; and

16 (3) existing authority that the Commission may
17 use to assist in reducing problems associated with
18 distracted driving.

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