

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 493

Recognizing the dangers of distracted driving.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2017

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY (for himself and Mr. HULTGREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the dangers of distracted driving.

Whereas, in 2011, Congress passed the Safe Teen and Novice Driver Uniform Protection Act of 2011, which authorized the Secretary of Transportation to award incentive grants to States with graduated driver licensing laws that require novice drivers younger than age 21 to comply with a two-stage licensing process before receiving an unrestricted driver's license;

Whereas the two-stage process included a learner's permit and a subsequent intermediate permit stage that prohibits the usage of cell phones or other communication devices in nonemergency situations;

Whereas this law aimed to reduce instances of impaired driving, including distracted driving;

Whereas, in 2015, the National Safety Council reported that 47 percent of drivers believe it is safe to send a text either manually or via voice-dictation system, 35 percent of teens use social media behind the wheel, and 54 percent of drivers feel pressure from work to drive distracted;

Whereas, in 2016, about 40,000 people died in motor vehicle crashes, representing a 14 percent increase since 2014;

Whereas, in 2016, the National Safety Council, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration all announced the Road to Zero initiative, with the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities within 30 years;

Whereas this coalition encourages a coordinated approach by local and State entities to increase driver safety;

Whereas, in 2017, AT&T reported that while driving, nearly 4 in 10 smartphone users tap into social media, almost 3 in 10 surf the net, and surprisingly, 1 in 10 video chat;

Whereas AT&T research reports that while texting and emailing remain the prevalent driver distraction, more than 1/4 polled reported using other social platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, while driving;

Whereas a shocking 1 in 7 reported they are active on Twitter from behind the wheel of a moving vehicle;

Whereas the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that distracted driving is a problem for all age groups, but especially for younger, novice drivers who use smartphones at a rate over two times higher than other age groups;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens;

Whereas 47 States and the District of Columbia now ban texting while driving, 15 States and the District of Columbia prohibit all hand held use of cell phones while driving, and 38 States and the District of Columbia ban all cell phone use by novice drivers; and

Whereas Congress incentivizes States to ban all cell phone use for teen drivers, except in cases of emergency: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
 2 nizes the dangers of distracted driving and expresses sup-
 3 port for—

4 (1) public and private efforts to educate the
 5 public about the dangers of distracted driving;

6 (2) industry-led engineering solutions to reduce
 7 fatal crash risks as a result of distracted driving;

8 (3) stronger enforcement of distracted driving
 9 laws;

10 (4) the “It Can Wait” campaign created by
 11 AT&T to raise awareness of the dangers of texting
 12 and driving; and

13 (5) the Road to Zero coalition and its efforts to
 14 encourage a holistic, safe system approach to im-

- 1 proving roadway safety, including reducing dis-
- 2 tracted driving and crashes related to it.

