

Comment Report

SF 60

A bill for an act relating to the use of an electronic device in a voice-activated or hands-free mode while driving, providing penalties, and making penalties applicable.(See SF 207, SF 547.)

Subcommittee Members: Lofgren-CH, Celsi, Klimesh

Date: 01/23/2023

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Room 315

Name: Sandy Wilson

Comment: Citizen Engagement declares AGAINST SF 60, again for the 3rd time. There are many distractions one experiences while driving eating, adjusting the radio, children, a crying baby, to name just a few. Are you also going to make these against the law? Additionally, answering a phone call from the dash board is just as distracting as you must look away from the road to connect have you seen those screens? Distraction from cell phone use should be covered under current distracted driving laws.

Name: Susan Bengtson

Comment: My sister, Iowan Ellen Bengtson, was killed by a man who admitted, on state patrol bodycam footage at the scene, to be looking at a Facebook marketplace post when he ran over her. Recreations of the accident confirmed his confession. This bill goes a long way towards incentivizing safe driving, and clarifies the meaning of adverbs like manual that led to the dismal of my sisters homicide trial. Lets all value life by putting down our phones while we drive.

Name: JoAnn Bengtson

Comment: Please support SF60. My daughter, Ellen, lived in Charles City, Iowa. She was killed by a distracted driver. Cell phones do not make us good drivers. This newer law will save lives by changing drivers habits. Driving under the influence of a phone can and does kill, and it causes more crashes than drunk driving.and should be thought of in the same way.It is vitally important to close the current gaps in Iowa legislation. Current law allowed the distracted driver that killed Ellen to be found not guilty by the Court despite confession on body cam that he was looking at a FB message on his phone when he struck something, without braking or swerving. It was my daughter. She did nothing wrong. According to the State Patrol investigation of the collision, the driver that ran her over from behind had 9.5 seconds, at least, where he should have noticed her. Driving distracted is essentially driving blind. My premise is safe driving is the right choice. And reckless driving is the wrong choice. SF60 creates clarity and deterrence.

Name: Randy Heitz

Comment: My brotherinlaw was killed while driving his bicycle by a distracted driver. My friend, Ellen Bengtson was killed by a distracted driver. Both were 28. My wife and I heard the impact 1/4 mile away a bicyclist getting killed I support SF 60 as a means to reduce distracted driving accidents. In addition to bicycling accidents, SF 60 is needed to reduce vehiclefarm equipment and pedestrians accidents, Thank you in advance for taking appropriate action to move this important bill to the next level.

Name: Peter Bengtson

Comment: I support SF 60. This legislation fixes loopholes in the existing legislation that allowed the distracted driver who killed our daughter to actually getting away with

murder. He didnt spend a night in jail or pay a ticket despite a confession that he was using his phone and didnt even know what he hit at 55+ mph. She didnt have a chance and was where she was suppose to be along the side of the rode of a marked bicycle route. The death of our daughter was completely avoidable if the driver wasnt using an electronic device. Driving is safest when your eyes are on the road and your hands are on the wheel. Distracted driving is a serious public safety hazard. The number of accidents, injuries and deaths are growing exponentially. It is the leading cause of vehicle crashes in the U.S., and law enforcement officials will tell you it is underreported. The amazing law enforcement and emergency responders who attended to our daughter in a ditch and transported her to a hospital in her last hours support SF 60. They were shocked and dismayed, as we were, that the driver could walk free and that they are hamstring to reduce the risks on the rode caused by distracted drivers. Your support of SF 60 will save lives. Make Iowa roads safer, hold distracted drivers accountable by closing loop holes in the current law by supporting SF 60. Thank you.