

**Testimony to House Committee on Judiciary  
on House Bill 2597**

**February 27, 2017**

**Gerik Kransky, Policy Director, The Street Trust,**

The Street Trust would like to submit testimony in support of HB 2597. This bill will help Oregon improve traffic safety by addressing our epidemic of distracted driving.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Distracted Driving website, distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving. All distractions endanger driver, passenger, and bystander safety. These types of distractions include:

- Texting
- Using a cell phone or smartphone
- Eating and drinking
- Talking to passengers
- Grooming
- Reading, including maps
- Using a navigation system
- Watching a video
- Adjusting a radio, CD player, or MP3 player

Because text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction.

According to American Community Survey data, the amount of Oregonians walking and biking to work between 2011 and 2013 was approximately 6.6%.<sup>1</sup> Yet 20% of all fatalities during that same time period were people walking and biking, according to Oregon Department of Transportation traffic crash data.<sup>2</sup> We know that distracted driving is playing a role in traffic crashes in Oregon and people walking and biking are the most at risk from the resulting crashes.

We are pleased to see the Oregon Department of Transportation and partners take a proactive approach to addressing this growing threat to people's health and safety and we encourage you to support HB 2597.

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<sup>1</sup> Alliance for Biking and Walking Benchmarking Report - Page 82  
<http://www.bikewalkalliance.org/download-the-2016-benchmarking-report>

<sup>2</sup> ODOT Crash Analysis & Reporting - Quick Facts  
[http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TDATA/pages/car/car\\_publications.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TDATA/pages/car/car_publications.aspx)

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