



June 22, 2017

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
HB 2597: Relating to Distracted Driving

Clackamas County supports HB 2597: The Board of County Commissioners supports HB 2597, which will improve traffic safety by reducing driver usage of mobile electronic devices in automobiles.

Use of mobile electronic devices, primarily cell phones, while driving is one of the most, if not the most, consistent and debilitating activities a driver can do while on the road – aside from driving while intoxicated. Oregon’s proactive efforts to limit cell phone use on the roads a few years ago was a great first step, but as cell phones continue to evolve and offer a larger suite of distractions beyond communication, the need for the law to expand is equally necessary. HB 2597 and its companion, SB 2, seek to accomplish this need by broadening the definition of distracting devices from “cellular devices” to “mobile electronic devices.”

Clackamas County takes a proactive approach to traffic safety. In 2012 we became the first county in Oregon to adopt a Traffic Safety Action Plan (TSAP) designed to create a county-wide safety culture. Clackamas County has also developed a *Drive to Zero* program, to complement the national *Toward Zero Deaths* effort. Drive to Zero is all about working with law enforcement, public health, education and other partners to reduce injuries and fatalities on all roadways in the county. Our goal is a 50 percent reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes by 2022. We are working toward that goal through education, outreach, training and community-based efforts.

Clackamas County supports the recommendation coming from the Statewide Distracted Driving Task Force to expand the law around cell phone usage, found here in HB 2597. Efforts like HB 2597 and SB 2 will help to ensure Oregon’s roads remain safe and that people and goods meet their final destination unharmed. This bill is good for Oregonians and Oregon’s economy.

We urge a “do pass” recommendation for HB 2597.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.