

# House Bill 4116

Sponsored by Representative NOBLE, Senator PROZANSKI; Representatives BARKER, BARRETO, ESQUIVEL, HELFRICH, LEWIS, NEARMAN, OLSON, RESCHKE, SMITH DB, SOLLMAN, STARK, VIAL, WHISNANT, WITT, Senator BOQUIST (Presession filed.)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Modifies exceptions and affirmative defenses to offense of driving a motor vehicle while using a mobile electronic device.

Provides that enhanced classification of offense may only be based on prior conviction occurring on or after July 1, 2018. Creates procedure by which person convicted of enhanced offense based on prior conviction occurring prior to July 1, 2018, may request that court redetermine classification of offense.

Takes effect July 1, 2018.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to the offense of driving a motor vehicle while using a mobile electronic device; creating  
3 new provisions; amending ORS 811.507 and section 5, chapter 629, Oregon Laws 2017; and pre-  
4 scribing an effective date.

5 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

6 **SECTION 1.** ORS 811.507 is amended to read:

7 811.507. (1) As used in this section:

8 (a)(A) "Driving" means operating a motor vehicle on a highway or premises open to the public,  
9 and while temporarily stationary because of traffic, a traffic control device or other momentary de-  
10 lays.

11 (B) "Driving" does not include when the motor vehicle has stopped in a location where it can  
12 safely remain stationary and:

13 (i) Is pulled over on the side of, or is pulled off, a roadway;

14 (ii) Is in a designated parking space; or

15 (iii) Is required to park in the roadway to conduct necessary utility maintenance work.

16 (b) "Hands-free accessory" means an attachment or built-in feature for or an addition to a mo-  
17 bile electronic device that when used gives a person the ability to keep both hands on the steering  
18 wheel.

19 (c)(A) "Mobile electronic device" means an electronic device that is not permanently installed  
20 in a motor vehicle.

21 (B) "Mobile electronic device" includes but is not limited to a device capable of text messaging,  
22 voice communication, entertainment, navigation, accessing the Internet or producing electronic mail.

23 (d) "Using a mobile electronic device" includes but is not limited to using a mobile electronic  
24 device for text messaging, voice communication, entertainment, navigation, accessing the Internet  
25 or producing electronic mail.

26 (2) A person commits the offense of driving a motor vehicle while using a mobile electronic de-  
27 vice if the person, while driving a motor vehicle on a highway or premises open to the public:

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

- 1 (a) Holds a mobile electronic device in the person's hand; or  
2 (b) Uses a mobile electronic device for any purpose.  
3 (3) This section does not apply to a person:  
4 (a) Who activates or deactivates a mobile electronic device or a function of the device;  
5 (b) Who is employed as a commercial motor vehicle driver, or as a school bus driver, and is  
6 using a mobile electronic device within the scope of the person's employment if the use is permitted  
7 under regulations promulgated pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 31136;  
8 (c) Who is operating a two-way radio device that transmits radio communication transmitted by  
9 a station operating on an authorized frequency within the **business**, citizens' or family radio service  
10 bands in accordance with rules of the Federal Communications Commission while transporting forest  
11 products, or while operating a vehicle to assist in logging operations, within the scope of the  
12 person's employment;  
13 (d) Who is using a two-way radio device while operating a school bus or school activity vehicle  
14 within the scope of the person's employment; [or]  
15 (e) Who is using a two-way radio device or operating a two-way radio device that transmits ra-  
16 dio communication transmitted by a station operating on an authorized frequency within the **busi-**  
17 **ness**, citizens' or family radio service bands in accordance with rules of the Federal  
18 Communications Commission while operating a vehicle owned or contracted by a utility for the  
19 purpose of installing, repairing, maintaining, operating or upgrading utility service, including but  
20 not limited to natural gas, electricity, water or telecommunications, within the scope of the person's  
21 employment[.];  
22 (f) **Who is using a mobile electronic device while operating a vehicle wider than the lane**  
23 **of travel, a vehicle transporting livestock or a vehicle requiring a slow-moving vehicle**  
24 **emblem under ORS 815.110, and the use of the device facilitates the safe operation of the**  
25 **vehicle; or**  
26 (g) **Who is using a mobile electronic device while operating a pilot or safety vehicle used**  
27 **to assist the safe movement of a vehicle described in paragraph (f) of this subsection, and**  
28 **the use of the device facilitates the safe movement of the vehicle described in paragraph (f)**  
29 **of this subsection.**  
30 (4) It is an affirmative defense to a prosecution of a person under this section that the person:  
31 (a) Used the mobile electronic device to communicate if the person was summoning or providing  
32 medical or other emergency help if no other person in the vehicle was capable of summoning help;  
33 (b) Was 18 years of age or older and was using a hands-free accessory;  
34 (c) Was driving an ambulance or emergency vehicle while acting within the scope of the person's  
35 employment;  
36 (d) Was a police officer, firefighter or emergency medical services provider and was acting  
37 within the scope of the person's employment;  
38 (e) Was 18 years of age or older, held a valid amateur radio operator license issued or any other  
39 license issued by the Federal Communications Commission and was operating an amateur radio;  
40 (f) Was operating a two-way radio device that transmits radio communication transmitted by a  
41 station operating on an authorized frequency within the **business**, citizens' or family radio service  
42 bands in accordance with rules of the Federal Communications Commission to summon medical or  
43 other emergency help; or  
44 (g) Was using a medical device.  
45 (5) The offense described in this section, driving a motor vehicle while using a mobile electronic

1 device, is:

2 (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, for a person's first conviction, a Class  
3 B traffic violation.

4 (b) For a person's first conviction, if commission of the offense contributes to an accident de-  
5 scribed in ORS 811.720, a Class A traffic violation.

6 (c) For a person's second conviction within a 10-year period following the date of the person's  
7 first conviction, a Class A traffic violation.

8 (d) For a person's third or subsequent conviction within a 10-year period preceding the date of  
9 the person's current conviction, a Class B misdemeanor.

10 (6) In addition to any other sentence that may be imposed, the court shall impose a minimum  
11 fine of \$2,000 on a person convicted of a Class B misdemeanor under subsection (5)(d) of this section.

12 (7) For purposes of this section, sentences for two or more convictions that are imposed in the  
13 same sentencing proceeding are considered to be one sentence.

14 (8)(a) For a person's first conviction of driving a motor vehicle while using a mobile electronic  
15 device, the court may suspend the fine to be imposed under subsection (5)(a) of this section on the  
16 condition that the person, within 120 days of sentencing:

17 (A) Complete at the person's own expense a distracted driving avoidance course approved by the  
18 Department of Transportation under ORS 811.508; and

19 (B) Provide proof of completion to the court.

20 (b) The court may schedule a hearing to determine whether the person successfully completed  
21 the distracted driving avoidance course.

22 (c) If the person has successfully completed the requirements described in paragraph (a) of this  
23 subsection, the court shall enter a sentence of discharge.

24 (d) If the person has not successfully completed the requirements described in paragraph (a) of  
25 this subsection, the court shall:

26 (A) Grant the person an extension based on good cause shown; or

27 (B) Impose the fine under subsection (5)(a) of this section.

28 (9) The department shall place signs on state highways to notify drivers that it is unlawful to  
29 drive a motor vehicle on the highways of this state while using a mobile electronic device and vi-  
30 olators are subject to criminal penalties.

31 **SECTION 2. The amendments to ORS 811.507 by section 1 of this 2018 Act apply to of-**  
32 **fenses committed on or after the effective date of this 2018 Act.**

33 **SECTION 3.** Section 5, chapter 629, Oregon Laws 2017, is amended to read:

34 **Sec. 5.** The amendments to ORS 811.507 by section 1, **chapter 629, Oregon Laws 2017**, [of this  
35 2017 Act] apply to: [conduct that occurs on or after the effective date of this 2017 Act.]

36 (1) **Offenses committed on or after October 1, 2017; and**

37 (2) **For purposes of determining prior convictions within a 10-year period preceding the**  
38 **offense under ORS 811.507 (5)(c) or (d), prior convictions occurring on or after July 1, 2018.**

39 **SECTION 4. (1) A person convicted of an offense under ORS 811.507 (5)(c) or (d), the**  
40 **classification of which was enhanced due to the court taking into account one or more prior**  
41 **convictions occurring before July 1, 2018, may in writing request that the court redetermine**  
42 **the classification of the offense.**

43 (2) **Upon receipt of a request under this section, if the court determines that the classi-**  
44 **fication of the offense was based upon the court taking into account one or more prior con-**  
45 **victions occurring before July 1, 2018, the court shall vacate the judgment of conviction and**

1 **enter a new judgment of conviction for a Class B or Class A traffic violation in accordance**  
2 **with ORS 811.507 (5)(a) or (b).**

3 **SECTION 5. This 2018 Act takes effect on July 1, 2018.**

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