

News for Immediate Release

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Governor Corbett Signs Ban on Texting While Driving in Pennsylvania

Camp Hill - Governor Tom Corbett today signed legislation that bans texting while driving on Pennsylvania roads. The new law, which makes texting while driving a primary offense carrying a \$50 fine, takes effect 120 calendar days from today.

“Senate Bill 314 aims to put a halt to texting from behind the wheel and is intended to save lives,” Corbett said during a bill-signing event in suburban Harrisburg. “No text message is worth a human life. The message of this legislation is drive now and text later.”

The new law specifically does the following:

- Prohibits as a primary offense all drivers from using an Interactive Wireless Communication Device (IWCD) to send, read or write a text-based message.
- Defines an IWCD as a wireless phone, personal digital assistant, smart phone, portable or mobile computer or similar devices that can be used for

- texting, instant messaging, emailing or browsing the Internet.
- Defines a text-based message as a text message, instant message, email or other written communication composed or received on an IWCD.
 - Institutes a \$50 fine for convictions under this section.
 - Makes clear that this law supersedes and preempts any local ordinances restricting the use of interactive wireless devices by drivers.

In 2010, there were almost 14,000 crashes in Pennsylvania where distracted driving played a role, with nearly 1,100 of those crashes involving a handheld cellular phone.

“We’ve said it in the past, but today, we are making it law: if you have an urgent need to text, you must pull over and park. If it’s not important enough to stop your car, then it’s certainly not important enough to risk a life,” said Corbett.

The governor thanked Sen. John Rafferty (R-Chester) and Sen. Tommy Tomlinson (R-Bucks) and Rep. Richard Geist (R-Blair) and Rep. Kathy Watson (R-Bucks) for their leadership on this legislation.

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