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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 221 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY B. MILLER, BIZZARRO, PICKETT, FREEMAN, BURNS,  
TOOHIL, CALTAGIRONE, J. HARRIS, SONNEY, DUSH, MURT, KINSEY,  
SCHLOSSBERG, BAKER, DAVIS, MACKENZIE, STAATS, FEE, MILLARD,  
MENTZER, GREINER, W. KELLER, V. BROWN, RAPP, READSHAW,  
KAUFFMAN, PASHINSKI, SCHWEYER, FITZGERALD, D. COSTA, WARD,  
DIGIROLAMO, WHEELAND, MARSICO, HILL-EVANS, ZIMMERMAN,  
STEPHENS, HAGGERTY, BOBACK, NEILSON, SCHEMEL, RADER, WARNER,  
HICKERNELL, KAVULICH, McCLINTON, KORTZ, MUSTIO, WATSON,  
R. BROWN, TAYLOR, CUTLER, M. QUINN, WARREN, MEHAFFIE,  
SCHLEGEL CULVER, PHILLIPS-HILL AND JOZWIAK, APRIL 10, 2017

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
APRIL 10, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Designating April 27, 2017, as "Don't Text and Drive Day" in  
2 Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, Texting while driving poses a significant risk to  
4 drivers, passengers and all individuals sharing the road; and

5 WHEREAS, Studies show that texting simultaneously while  
6 driving involves manual, visual and mental distraction and is  
7 among the worst of all driver distractions; and

8 WHEREAS, The General Assembly has undertaken efforts to  
9 reduce texting while driving, including the enactment of Act 98  
10 of 2011, which prohibits drivers from operating a motor vehicle  
11 on a highway or traffic way in this Commonwealth while using an  
12 interactive wireless communications device to send, read or  
13 write a text-based communication while driving a vehicle; and

1       WHEREAS, Act 85 of 2014 prohibits drivers from engaging in  
2 texting while operating a commercial motor vehicle or motor  
3 carrier vehicle; and

4       WHEREAS, Act 165 of 2016 increases the penalty for the  
5 offense of homicide by vehicle and for the offense of aggravated  
6 assault by vehicle while using text-based communication; and

7       WHEREAS, The evidence and research show that the dangers of  
8 texting while driving continue to mount and support the actions  
9 of the General Assembly; and

10       WHEREAS, Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's  
11 attention away from the road for approximately 4.5 seconds, the  
12 equivalent, at more than 50 miles per hour, of driving the  
13 length of a football field sightless; and

14       WHEREAS, According to the National Highway Traffic Safety  
15 Administration, text messaging creates a crash risk 23 times  
16 greater than driving while not distracted; and

17       WHEREAS, The National Safety Council estimates more than  
18 341,000, or 6%, of all crashes in 2013 involved an accident  
19 while the driver was text messaging; and

20       WHEREAS, The 2014 study conducted by the United States  
21 Department of Transportation notes that, at any given moment  
22 during daylight hours, more than 587,000 vehicles were being  
23 driven by someone using a handheld cell phone; and

24       WHEREAS, According to the National Highway Traffic Safety  
25 Administration, the percentage of drivers text messaging or  
26 visibly manipulating handheld devices increased from more than  
27 1.5% in 2013 to more than 2% in 2015; and

28       WHEREAS, According to a University of Michigan Transportation  
29 Research Institute study, approximately 25% of teenagers respond  
30 to and 30% read a text message at least once every time they

1 drive and 20% of teenagers and 10% of parents admitted to having  
2 an extended multi-message texting conversation while driving;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Between 2012 and 2014 according to the  
5 Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, there were more  
6 than 5,500 citations for distracted driving violations in this  
7 Commonwealth, with approximately 4,000 of those violations  
8 specific to texting; and

9 WHEREAS, Between 2012 and 2014 according to the Department of  
10 Transportation's *Pennsylvania Crash Facts & Statistics*, there  
11 were a total of 42,969 crashes in this Commonwealth involving  
12 distracted driving, with 161 of those crashes resulting in  
13 fatalities; and

14 WHEREAS, The evidence makes it clear that texting while  
15 driving is extremely prevalent and increases the potential  
16 danger on our roadways, causes great damage to property and  
17 destroys lives and livelihoods of crash victims, all of which is  
18 preventable; therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate April  
20 27, 2017 as "Don't Text and Drive Day" in Pennsylvania,  
21 appealing to individuals, government agencies, business leaders,  
22 hospitals, schools and public and private institutions within  
23 this Commonwealth to promote awareness of the dangers of texting  
24 while driving and to support programs and policies that reduce  
25 the incidence of texting while driving in this Commonwealth and  
26 nationwide; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge all  
28 residents of this Commonwealth to be considerate of the lives  
29 and property of others by refraining from texting while driving;  
30 and be it further

1       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives urge law  
2 enforcement across this Commonwealth to continue to enforce  
3 Pennsylvania's texting and driving laws with diligence.