



State of Wisconsin  
2017 - 2018 LEGISLATURE

LRB-4865/1  
EVM:emw

## 2017 SENATE BILL 608

November 30, 2017 - Introduced by Senators VINEHOUT and L. TAYLOR, cosponsored by Representatives BARCA, SPIROS, ANDERSON, OHNSTAD, FIELDS, HEBL, BERCEAU, CONSIDINE, POPE, SARGENT, SPREITZER and SUBECK. Referred to Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs.

1     **AN ACT to renumber and amend** 346.89 (4) (a); **to amend** 346.95 (1) and 346.95  
2             (2); and **to create** 346.89 (4) (a) 2. and 3. of the statutes; **relating to:** use of  
3             wireless telephones while driving and providing a penalty.

---

### *Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

This bill prohibits, with certain exceptions, any person from driving while using a cellular or other wireless telephone (cellular phone). The exceptions include certain hands-free and emergency-related use.

Current law prohibits inattentive driving of a motor vehicle, which means that a driver of a motor vehicle may not be engaged or occupied with an activity, other than driving the vehicle, that interferes with the safe driving of the vehicle. Persons who violate this prohibition may be required to forfeit not less than \$20 nor more than \$400. Under current law, a person driving under an instruction permit or a probationary license is prohibited from driving a motor vehicle while using a cellular phone, except to report an emergency. Also, a person is prohibited from driving a motor vehicle while using a cellular phone in a highway construction zone, except to report an emergency. Persons who violate either of these prohibitions may be required to forfeit not less than \$20 nor more than \$40 for a first offense, and not less than \$50 nor more than \$100 for a second or subsequent offense within one year.

This bill prohibits any person from driving while using a cellular phone. Except in certain cases involving persons driving under an instruction permit or a probationary license, the prohibition does not apply to any of the following: 1) operators of authorized emergency vehicles; 2) use of certain emergency alert or

**SENATE BILL 608**

vehicle monitoring devices; 3) use of global positioning system devices; 4) certain amateur radio operators; 5) certain use of hands-free telephones; and 6) use in response to an emergency. Persons who violate this prohibition may be required to forfeit not less than \$20 nor more than \$400.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

---

*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

1           **SECTION 1.** 346.89 (4) (a) of the statutes is renumbered 346.89 (4) (a) 1. and  
2 amended to read:

3           346.89 (4) (a) 1. ~~Subject to sub. (3), no~~ No person who holds a probationary  
4 license issued under s. 343.085, ~~or an instruction permit issued under s. 343.07,~~ may  
5 drive, as defined in s. 343.305 (1) (b), any motor vehicle while using a cellular or other  
6 wireless telephone, ~~except to report an emergency.~~

7           **SECTION 2.** 346.89 (4) (a) 2. and 3. of the statutes are created to read:

8           346.89 (4) (a) 2. Except as provided in subd. 3., this paragraph does not apply  
9 to any of the following:

10           a. The operator of an authorized emergency vehicle.

11           b. The use of any device whose primary function is transmitting and receiving  
12 emergency alert messages and messages related to the operation of the vehicle or an  
13 accessory that is integrated into the electrical system of a vehicle.

14           c. The use of a global positioning system device, including a global positioning  
15 system device that is integrated into a wireless telephone.

16           d. An amateur radio operator who holds a valid amateur radio operator's  
17 license issued by the federal communications commission when he or she is using  
18 dedicated amateur radio 2-way radio communication equipment and observing  
19 proper amateur radio operating procedures.

**SENATE BILL 608**

1 e. The use of a voice-operated or hands-free wireless telephone if the driver  
2 of the motor vehicle does not use his or her hands to operate the telephone, except  
3 to activate or deactivate a feature or function of the telephone, including dialing a  
4 telephone number.

5 f. The use of a wireless telephone in response to an emergency.

6 3. Subject to sub. (3), subd. 2. a. to e. do not apply to a person who holds a  
7 probationary license issued under s. 343.085 or an instruction permit issued under  
8 s. 343.07.

9 **SECTION 3.** 346.95 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

10 346.95 (1) Any person violating s. 346.87, 346.88, 346.89 (4) (b), (4m), or (5),  
11 346.90 to 346.92, or 346.94 (1), (9), (10), (11), (12), or (15) may be required to forfeit  
12 not less than \$20 nor more than \$40 for the first offense and not less than \$50 nor  
13 more than \$100 for the 2nd or subsequent conviction within a year.

14 **SECTION 4.** 346.95 (2) of the statutes is amended to read:

15 346.95 (2) Any person violating s. 346.89 (1) ~~or~~, (3) (a), or (4) (a) or 346.94 (2),  
16 (4), or (7) may be required to forfeit not less than \$20 nor more than \$400.

17 **SECTION 5. Effective date.**

18 (1) This act takes effect on the first day of the 13th month beginning after  
19 publication.

20 (END)