



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

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**DATE:** May 30, 2007  
**TO:** Senate Judiciary Committee  
**FROM:** Troy E. Costales  
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**SUBJECT:** House Bill 2872

## **INTRODUCTION**

House Bill 2872 makes it illegal for anyone under 18 years of age to use a mobile communication device while driving a vehicle unless they are operating an ambulance or emergency vehicle or summoning medical or other emergency help if no other person in the vehicle is able to do so. This creates an additional restriction for a provisional driver license and driver instruction permit.

## **DISCUSSION**

In a recent survey of Washington State King County teens, 70% reported using a cell phone while driving. Three-quarters of those students indicate that they do so with some frequency. Oregon's current provisional driver license restrictions have resulted in reductions of fatal and injury crashes where a 16 year old was the driver, dropping from 1,196 in 1998 to 656 in 2005 – over a 45% reduction. A significant component of Oregon's provisional driving restrictions are rules that limit distractions. Limiting the additional distraction of a cell phone would provide one more reduction in the overall number of distractions to the teen driver. For this reason the National Transportation Safety Board has made a restriction such as the one proposed in HB 2872 a recommended policy (H-03-8).

## **SUMMARY**

While no definitive statistical proof exists to indicate that a cell phone restriction among provisional drivers will substantially impact the instance and severity of teen driving crashes, the Oregon Department of Transportation believes there is sufficient evidence that implementation of this restriction may result in some level of crash reduction.