

AAA Applauds the Michigan House for Passage of New Distracted Driving Legislation

The Auto Club Group urges the Senate to pass this life saving legislation

DEARBORN, Michigan — AAA applauds House lawmakers for passing three bills that would modernize Michigan's distracted driving laws. The package of bills (HBs [4250](#), [4251](#) and [4252](#)), which now head to the Michigan Senate, would address a variety of issues, including banning the use of handheld devices beyond just texting and driving to include the use of social media, video streaming and sending or receiving calls.

"AAA – The Auto Club Group is so grateful that House lawmakers set the wheels in motion for the passage of the distracted driving bills," said Craig Ryan, Director of Government Relations, AAA-The Auto Club Group. "Distracted driving remains a growing traffic safety problem here in Michigan. Our research shows that education and legislation are key factors in changing driving behavior."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- 400,000 people are injured in distraction-related crashes every year.
- Distracted driving crashes killed 3,522 people in the United States in 2021 – an average of 10 deaths per day.
- That number was up 12 percent from the year before (3,138 deaths in 2020).
- In Michigan alone, there were 51 fatal crashes involving a distracted driver, resulting in 59 fatalities in 2021.
- The true numbers are likely much higher due to underreporting.

Michigan's current distracted driving law only addresses texting while driving. It does not prohibit the other ways individuals interact with their cellphones such as with mobile apps, social media or even video streaming. This lack of clarity and reference to out-of-date cellphone technology prompted lawmakers to introduce this package of bills that would strengthen Michigan's existing distracted driving law in an effort to create safer roads.

Sobering statistics

- Looking away from the road for just two seconds doubles the risk of a crash.
- Five seconds of reading an email or text is like driving across a football field while blindfolded.
- Cognitive distractions last longer than you think and can cause a dangerous crash or fatality. Mental distraction can last up to 27 seconds after dialing, texting or changing the radio station.
- New teen drivers are 3x as likely as adults to be involved in a deadly crash. Michigan's graduated driver licensing system is designed to help new drivers gradually learn the rules of the road under less risky conditions.

"Legislation like this will help prevent drivers from becoming another statistic," said Adrienne Woodland, spokesperson, AAA – The Auto Club Group. "Today, with the advancements of in-vehicle technology and the use of cellphones in our daily lives, drivers have the potential to be more distracted than ever before. Distracted driving legislation needs to be in line with current trends and these bills are a step in the right direction."

AAA offers these tips to avoid distracted driving:

- **Put it away.** Place your mobile device out of sight to prevent temptation.
- **Know where you're going.** If using a navigation system, program the destination before driving.
- **Pull over.** If you must call or text while on the road, pull off the road safely and stop first.
- **Ask passengers for help.** If riding with someone, seek their help to navigate, make a call or send a message.
- **Be a good passenger.** Speak out if the driver of your vehicle is distracted.
- **Don't be a distraction.** Avoid calling or texting others when you know they are driving.
- **Activate Do Not Disturb.** Setting up this feature on iPhone or Android device will prevent calls from coming in while you're driving.
- **Everyone should avoid distractions while in traffic.** Just as drivers need to pay attention, so do pedestrians and bicyclists. Never call, text or play games while walking or cycling.

AAA in Michigan celebrated its **100th Anniversary - A Century of Service** in 2016 and has over 1.5 million members across the state. It is part of The Auto Club Group (ACG). Connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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