



Department Source: City Manager

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: February 18, 2018

Re: Resolution expressing support for Missouri General Assembly legislation relating to cell phone use while driving.

## Executive Summary

At the January 22, 2019 City Council meeting, Council adopted R10-19 adopting legislative tracking priorities for the 2019 federal and state legislative sessions. The list of priorities adopted includes issues relating to distracted driving. Additionally, Enforcement Critical Action #2, Initiative A of the Vision Zero Action Plan states, "Support statewide initiatives to ban cell phone use and texting while driving." The purpose of this council memo is to address that initiative through a resolution and letter expressing support for Missouri General Assembly House and Senate Bills relating to the use of a cell phone while driving. This is a similar resolution and letter that was approved unanimously by City Council last year.

## Discussion

Enforcement Critical Action #2, Initiative A of the Vision Zero Action Plan states, "Support statewide initiatives to ban cell phone use and texting while driving." The initiative goes on to state, "Current State of Missouri law prohibits texting while operating a motor vehicle for people age 21 and younger. It also prohibits any person operating a commercial vehicle from using wireless communication device to send, read, or write a text or electronic message. Teams will work together to support current bills under consideration by the Missouri General Assembly to broaden these restrictions to include all drivers and to ban cell phone use for all ages while driving."

This initiative will be addressed through a resolution expressing support for Missouri General Assembly House and Senate Bills which propose legislation to prohibit cell phone use while operating a motor vehicle. For a summary of all legislation we recommend supporting, please see the attached list. If Council is supportive, this resolution will also direct staff to send a letter of support (sample letter attached), along with a copy of the resolution to Columbia's delegation of state representatives in the Missouri General Assembly to make them aware of our support for the 2019 proposed legislation.

It is important to mention that members of the Vision Zero team have been in contact with the Missouri Department of Transportation and they also plan to actively support these same pieces of legislation.

Why it's important:

- The [Missouri State Highway Patrol](#) (MSHP) shows that cell phones contributed to 2,604 crashes in Missouri in 2017.
  - 12 of these were fatalities; 846 were personal injuries



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- Texting increases the risk of a car crash by 50%.
- The [National Safety Council](#) reported that 73% of drivers think more enforcement of texting laws is needed.
- The [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#) reported that 85% of Americans think that other drivers who talk on cell phones are a threat to safety.
- A report from [State Farm](#) revealed nearly 30% of drivers surveyed admitted to accessing the Internet while driving. (compared to just 13% in 2009)
- Only 14 states and the District of Columbia currently ban the use of handheld cell phones while driving. The District of Columbia and 37 states restrict the use of cell phones by novice drivers, and 44 states and the District of Columbia ban text messaging while driving. No states ban the use of hands-free devices.
- Arizona, Texas, Montana, and Missouri have yet to adopt a texting law—the first step toward eliminating deadly distractions. The [National Transportation Safety Board](#) is calling on us to take action as a significant number of lives can be saved and injuries avoided if states continue to expand and strengthen their distracted driving laws. They have additionally recommended all states ban handheld cell phone use by drivers.

## Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: None.  
Long-Term Impact: None.

## Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

### Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Public Safety, Secondary Impact: Social Equity, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

## Legislative History

Date	Action
01/22/2019	R10-19: Adopting legislative tracking priorities for the 2019 federal and state legislative sessions. VOTING YES: RUFFIN, TRAPP, SKALA, THOMAS, PITZER, PETERS, TREECE. VOTING NO: NO ONE. Resolution declared adopted.
02/19/2018	R21-18: Resolution expressing support for state legislation to prohibit the use of hand-held wireless communication devices while operating a motor vehicle. VOTING YES: SKALA, THOMAS, PITZER, PETERS, TREECE, RUFFIN (Trapp stepped out during the vote)



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	on this item). VOTING NO: NO ONE. Resolution declared adopted.
05/15/2017	REP37-17: City of Columbia Vision Zero Action Plan 2017-2020.
12/19/2016	PR178-16: Adopting a "Vision Zero" Policy; setting a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries in Columbia by 2030. The vote on PR178-16, as amended, was recorded as follows: VOTING YES: TRAPP, SKALA, THOMAS, NAUSER, PETERS, TREECE, RUFFIN). VOTING NO: NO ONE. Policy resolution declared adopted.

## Suggested Council Action

Staff recommends adoption of the resolution.