



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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Joint Finance & Police and Fire

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, mobile phone usage, particularly for text messaging, has grown enormously over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, the International Telecommunication Union has reported that the number of text messages sent worldwide has tripled over the past three years to reach a staggering 6.1 trillion in 2010; and

WHEREAS, according to International Telecommunication Union, nearly 200,000 text messages are sent every second; and

WHEREAS, the increase of individuals text messaging while driving has created an elevated hazard to public safety; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2009, 5,474 people were killed on U.S. roadways and an estimated 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that involved distracted driving; and

WHEREAS, 20 percent of injury crashes in 2009 involved reports of distracted driving; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, 18 percent of the fatalities in distraction-related crashes involved reports of cell phone use; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Secretary of State reports that using a cell phone or texting while driving increases the chances of getting into a crash by at least 400 percent; and

WHEREAS, the age group with the greatest proportion of distracted drivers is under-20 as 16 percent of all drivers younger than 20 years of age were reported to have been distracted while driving; and

WHEREAS, according to a study published by the University of Utah, using a cell phone while driving delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol concentration at the legal limit of .08 percent; and

WHEREAS, despite the apparent risks, surveys demonstrate that upwards of 86 percent of teenagers aged 16-19 have admitted to engaging in distracted driving behaviors and 28 percent have admitted to texting while driving; and

WHEREAS, on October 8, 2008, the City Council adopted an ordinance making it illegal to text while driving in the City of Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, a recent survey referenced by the Illinois Tollway indicated that 40 percent of Illinois Tollway customers were unaware that texting while driving is illegal; and

WHEREAS, AT&T has embarked upon a national public awareness campaign entitled "Texting & Driving - It Can Wait," which seeks to educate cell phone users on the dangers of texting while driving; and

WHEREAS, AT&T Illinois recently announced that Chicago Bulls basketball star Derrick Rose will assist its campaign to warn Illinois high school students against the dangers of texting while driving; and
WHEREAS, AT&T's "It Can Wait" campaign challenges Illinois high school students to become familiar with the dangers of texting while driving by watching "The Last Text" documentary and encourages them to take the "Texting & Driving -- It Can Wait," Pledge; and

WHEREAS, the Corporate Authorities of the City of Chicago support public outreach efforts to increase public awareness about the dangers of distracted driving; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and the Members of the Chicago City Council, do hereby encourage all public and private high schools to take the AT&T "Texting & Driving -- It Can Wait," Pledge; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that representatives from the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Police Department, and AT&T Illinois are hereby invited to appear before the Joint Committee of the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Police and Fire to testify at a public hearing regarding the potential to collaborate on public outreach efforts to increase public awareness about the dangers of distracted driving.

Alderman Michelle A. Harris, 8th Ward

Alderman Edward M. Burke, 14 Ward

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