

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION REQUIRING HANDS-FREE CELL AND HANDHELD DEVICE USE WHILE DRIVING; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, distracted driving is a leading cause of motor vehicle crashes in the United States, contributing to thousands of injuries and fatalities each year; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that handheld device interaction while driving increases the risk of crashing by 23 times; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), also reports handheld device interaction while driving is six times more dangerous than driving under the influence of alcohol

WHEREAS, a study from Cambridge Mobile Telematics reported an increase in screen interaction time while driving of 17.8% from 2020 to 2023; and

WHEREAS, the use of handheld devices while driving significantly impairs a driver's ability to safely operate a vehicle, diverting attention from the road and increasing reaction times; and

WHEREAS, according to Florida State Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles data, a crash occurs every 44 seconds in Florida, and one in seven crashes involve distracted drivers.

WHEREAS, the Florida State Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles reports that there were over 48,000 car accidents related to distracted driving in 2021, which resulted in over 300 people dead and over 2,700 seriously injured. In 2022, 53,596 distracted driving crashes were reported, resulting in 268 fatalities. Preliminary numbers for 2023 are approximately 54,800 distracted driving crashes in Florida resulting in nearly 300 deaths.

WHEREAS, implementing hands-free cell and handheld device use legislation can reduce the incidence of distracted driving, saving lives and promoting safer roadways for all; and

WHEREAS, 31 states have successfully enacted hands-free laws, resulting in a measurable decrease in crashes and fatalities related to distracted driving; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of our local government to advocate for the safety and well-being of our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA:

1. The Board hereby expresses its strong support for legislation mandating the use of hands-free devices while driving.

2. The Board urges the Florida State Legislature to pass such legislation to enhance road safety and protect lives.
3. That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Florida State Legislature and relevant advocacy groups to demonstrate our commitment to reducing distracted driving and improving the safety of our roadways.

DULY ADOPTED in regular session, this ____ day of January 2024

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Charles S. Chestnut, IV, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

Date: _____

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM

J.K. "Jess" Irby, Esq., Clerk
(SEAL)

Alachua County Attorney's Office