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**Testimony to the Senate Transportation Committee
In Support of SB441
March 13, 2018**

Chairman Petersen and Committee Members,

Our associations support SB441. In 2016, failing to give full time/attention to driving was the top contributor to traffic crashes in Kansas.¹ This was a contributing circumstance in at least 20%, or nearly 15,000, of the crashes.² From 2012 through 2016, 456 traffic fatalities in Kansas involved distracted driving.³ And we know in many crashes distracted driving occurs but is not identified.

The issue of distracted driving takes on many forms. As officers, we see many non-driving related activities people engage in while operating a motor vehicle. For example, reading a book or newspaper, putting on makeup, shaving, texting, and many others. Even talking on a cell phone has been determined to be enough to create a lapse in safe operation to many drivers.

This bill reflects the amendments this committee made in SB274 emulating a local city ordinance that has been upheld in the Kansas Appellate Courts. The proposed new statute is straight forward and will help officers to address the continuing problem of distracted driving. This statute would apply when a vehicle is operated in one of two circumstances.

1. A manner presenting a “heedless disregard for the right or safety of others.” Or
2. Inattentively in a manner endangering, or likely to endanger, any person or property.

This bill will offer a substantial improvement over the tools we have today. The distracted driving problem is getting so large we must take some action to address it. Please recommend this bill favorably. We believe it will enhance safety on our roadways.

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¹ Kansas Transportation Quick Facts (<http://www.ksdot.org/Assets/wwwksdotorg/pdf/QuickFacts.pdf>)

² 2016 Kansas Traffic Crash Facts
(<http://www.ksdot.org/Assets/wwwksdotorg/bureaus/burTransPlan/prodinfo/2016factsbook/CCs.pdf>)

³ KDOT Drive to Zero 2016 Dashboard Report
(<http://www.ksdot.org/Assets/wwwksdotorg/bureaus/burTrafficSaf/reports/reportspdf/2016AnnualDashboardReport.pdf>)