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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**REGARDING HOUSE BILL 2792
RELATING TO HANDS FREE PHONE USE WHILE DRIVING**

March 10, 2026

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

I am Catherine Magaña, Legislative Liaison for the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). I am here today to provide testimony on House Bill 2792. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to meet with you and to provide comments.

KDOT supports legislation to amend or create state laws that further enhance the safety of the traveling public and those that work on our roadways. The act of driving requires a person's full attention. Any action that takes a driver's hands off the wheel, eyes off the road or interrupts their train of thought is distracted driving and can create an unsafe driving environment for themselves and anyone else on or near the road. A driver engaging in talking, texting or interacting with a phone will exhibit similar traits to an impaired driver like trouble maintaining their lane, inconsistent speed, and slower reaction times.

Eliminating hand-held use of mobile phones while driving in school and road construction zones would increase safety. School zones are unique in that children and motor vehicles are in very close proximity and require drivers to have their full and undivided attention to driving. Road construction zones also bring motor vehicles and workers closer together. Many road construction zones have reduced lane widths, require non-traditional lane maneuvers, detours, and possible flagger operations. The potential for any one or combination of these changes in the roadway requires a driver to be fully focused on the task of driving so they can react safely and appropriately. Distracted driving puts the safety of KDOT's workers along our roadways, as well as the safety of our contractors' workers, at risk.

In 2024, there were 13,837 distracted-driving-related crashes, resulting in 71 fatalities and 454 serious injuries. Among the people harmed in these crashes, 1 in 5 died, and when fatalities and serious injuries are combined, approximately 1 in 4 people were killed or suffered a life-altering injury.

Distracted Driving Related Crashes (2024)			
	Total Distracted Driving Related Crashes	Total Fatalities	Total Serious Injuries
	13837	339	1912
	Total Crashes	Total Distracted Driving Fatalities	Total Distracted Driving Related Serious Injuries
	61495	71	454
% of Distracted Driving Related Crashes (rounded)	23%	21%	24%

KDOT believes education is an important part of keeping our roadways safe. If enacted, KDOT will develop and conduct an educational campaign alerting drivers of this lifesaving law change. KDOT does this for all new safety law changes to help educate citizens that are traveling on our roadways as a part of our ongoing safety education efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 2792. The agency respectfully asks the committee to support passage of this bill. I am happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.