



January 26, 2018

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill No. 274
Chairman Mike Petersen and
Members of the Senate Transportation Committee

Dear Chairman Petersen and Committee:

Bike Walk Wichita, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 2010 to improve and increase biking and walking in the Wichita area. We have over 2,800 supporters and about 250 active volunteers. Bike Walk Wichita works to support bicycle and pedestrian-related efforts, especially relating to safety.


On behalf of our Bike Walk Wichita board and thousands of supporters, we strongly support the passage of Senate Bill 274 as a positive step toward increased road safety.

Senate Bill No. 274 adds a new general prohibition on distracted driving, which will greatly improve road safety, especially for vulnerable road users such as bicyclists and pedestrians. Although Kansas law has prohibited texting while driving for several years, crashes involving distracted driving have continued to increase. This may be due in part to the fact that modern motor vehicles increasingly contain other sources of distraction, such as interactive screens and entertainment, which are not addressed by the texting-while-driving law. In addition, even traffic defense lawyers have written that there is a great deal of confusion about the texting law, involving the details of what constitutes "texting" and problems of proof of violation. Adopting Senate Bill 274 would improve safety by applying to all forms of distracted driving, regardless of the exact nature. Accordingly, Bike Walk Wichita strongly supports the passage of Senate Bill 274.

If there is any additional way that we can assist in the adoption of this bill, please let me know.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Alan Kaller
President, Bike Walk Wichita, Inc.
214-208-0267
alan@bikewalkwchita.org