

Sneed Law Firm, LLC

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Mike Petersen, Chairman
Senate Transportation Committee

From: William W. Sneed, Legislative Counsel
The State Farm Insurance Companies

Date: January 25, 2020

RE: SB 332

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee: My name is Bill Sneed and I am Legislative Counsel for the State Farm Insurance Companies ("State Farm"). State Farm is the largest insurer of homes and automobiles in Kansas. State Farm insures one out of every three cars and one out of every four homes in the United States.

State Farm supports SB 332, limited "hands free" bill, as it would significantly improve the safety of Kansas roads by eliminating additional distracted driving-related practices by prohibiting the handheld use of a cell phone for drivers under the age of 18 when they are on Kansas roads, plus all drivers that drive through a school zone during designated school hours or through a road construction zone.

SB 332 would provide additional guardrails for safe vehicle operation and enable additional enforcement mechanisms to better position law enforcement across Kansas.

SB 332 is a timely effort as National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data indicates that, despite ever-increasing vehicle safety technology, the number of traffic fatalities has continued to rise and are at an alarming 15 year high. According to KDOT statistics, Kansas averages 15,000 crashes annually due to distracted driving each year, thus about 1 in 4 crashes are attributed to inattention. SB 332 would help to stem this tide and provide enhanced protections to Kansas citizens who are among the most vulnerable bystanders.

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SB 332 would also bring Kansas in line with many other states that have instituted hands free protection laws and seen drastic decreases in their traffic fatality rates.

In short, SB 332 is very likely to help save additional lives and do so in the least restrictive way possible. As such, State Farm supports the adoption of SB 332 and continued efforts by the Kansas Legislature to improve the safety of Kansas roads.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William W Sneed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "W".

William W Sneed