



General Assembly

Amendment

January Session, 2025

LCO No. 10025



Offered by:

REP. HOWARD, 43rd Dist.

REP. CANDELORA V., 86th Dist.

REP. O'DEA, 125th Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 7160

File No. 567

Cal. No. 352

(As Amended)

"AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND CONCERNING PENALTIES FOR OPERATING A MOTOR VEHICLE AND VESSEL WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR OR ANY DRUG, PONTOON BOATS, TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE MOTOR VEHICLE STATUTES, VIDEO PRESENTATION UPON LICENSE RENEWAL AND THE SAFE DRIVING PRACTICES COURSE."

1 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
2 internal references accordingly:

3 "Sec. 501. Section 14-296aa of the general statutes is repealed and the
4 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

5 (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the
6 following meanings:

7 (1) "Mobile telephone" means a cellular, analog, wireless or digital
8 telephone capable of sending or receiving telephone communications
9 without an access line for service.

10 (2) "Using" or "use" means (A) holding a hand-held mobile telephone
11 to, or in the immediate proximity of, the user's ear, or (B) watching or
12 playing a video on a mobile electronic device that is in full view of the
13 operator in a normal driving position.

14 (3) "Hand-held mobile telephone" means a mobile telephone with
15 which a user engages in a call using at least one hand.

16 (4) "Hands-free accessory" means an attachment, add-on, built-in
17 feature, or addition to a mobile telephone, whether or not permanently
18 installed in a motor vehicle, that, when used, allows the vehicle operator
19 to maintain both hands on the steering wheel.

20 (5) "Hands-free mobile telephone" means a hand-held mobile
21 telephone that has an internal feature or function, or that is equipped
22 with an attachment or addition, whether or not permanently part of
23 such hand-held mobile telephone, by which a user engages in a call
24 without the use of either hand, whether or not the use of either hand is
25 necessary to activate, deactivate or initiate a function of such telephone.

26 (6) "Engage in a call" means talking into or listening on a hand-held
27 mobile telephone, but does not include holding a hand-held mobile
28 telephone to activate, deactivate or initiate a function of such telephone.

29 (7) "Immediate proximity" means the distance that permits the
30 operator of a hand-held mobile telephone to hear telecommunications
31 transmitted over such hand-held mobile telephone, but does not require
32 physical contact with such operator's ear.

33 (8) "Mobile electronic device" means (A) any hand-held or other
34 portable electronic equipment capable of providing data
35 communication between two or more persons, including a text
36 messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant [,] or a

37 laptop computer, (B) any equipment that is capable of playing a video
38 game or a digital video disk, [or] (C) any equipment on which digital
39 photographs are taken or transmitted, (D) any installed screen, video
40 monitor or other means of providing a visual display, or (E) any
41 combination thereof. [, but] "Mobile electronic device" does not include
42 any audio equipment or any equipment installed in a motor vehicle for
43 the purpose of providing (i) navigation, (ii) emergency assistance to the
44 operator of such motor vehicle, or (iii) video entertainment to the
45 passengers in the rear seats of such motor vehicle that is not in full view
46 of the operator in a normal driving position.

47 (9) "Operating a motor vehicle" means operating a motor vehicle on
48 any highway, [as defined in section 14-1,] including being temporarily
49 stationary due to traffic, road conditions or a traffic control sign or
50 signal, but not including being parked on the side or shoulder of any
51 highway where such vehicle is safely able to remain stationary.

52 (10) "Highway", "commercial motor vehicle" and "authorized
53 emergency vehicle" have the same meanings as provided in section 14-
54 1.

55 (b) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection and
56 subsections (c) and (d) of this section, no person shall operate a motor
57 vehicle upon a highway [, as defined in section 14-1,] while using a
58 hand-held mobile telephone to engage in a call or while using a mobile
59 electronic device. An operator of a motor vehicle who types, sends or
60 reads a text message with a hand-held mobile telephone or mobile
61 electronic device while operating a motor vehicle shall be in violation of
62 this section, except that if such operator is driving a commercial motor
63 vehicle, [as defined in section 14-1,] such operator shall be charged with
64 a violation of subsection (e) of this section.

65 (2) An operator of a motor vehicle who holds a hand-held mobile
66 telephone to, or in the immediate proximity of, his or her ear while
67 operating a motor vehicle is presumed to be engaging in a call within
68 the meaning of this section. The presumption established by this

69 subdivision is rebuttable by evidence tending to show that the operator
70 was not engaged in a call.

71 (3) The provisions of this subsection shall not be construed as
72 authorizing the seizure or forfeiture of a hand-held mobile telephone or
73 a mobile electronic device, unless otherwise provided by law.

74 (4) Subdivision (1) of this subsection shall not apply to: (A) The use
75 of a hand-held mobile telephone for the sole purpose of communicating
76 with any of the following regarding an emergency situation: An
77 emergency response operator; a hospital, physician's office or health
78 clinic; an ambulance company; a fire department; or a police
79 department, [or] (B) any of the following persons while in the
80 performance of their official duties and within the scope of their
81 employment: A peace officer, as defined in subdivision (9) of section
82 53a-3, a firefighter or an operator of an ambulance or authorized
83 emergency vehicle [, as defined in section 14-1,] or a member of the
84 armed forces of the United States, as defined in section 27-103, while
85 operating a military vehicle, [or] (C) the use of a hand-held radio by a
86 person with an amateur radio station license issued by the Federal
87 Communications Commission in emergency situations for emergency
88 purposes only, or (D) the use of a hands-free mobile telephone.

89 (c) No person shall use a hand-held mobile telephone or other
90 electronic device, including those with hands-free accessories, or a
91 mobile electronic device, while operating a school bus that is carrying
92 passengers, except that this subsection shall not apply when such
93 person: (1) Places an emergency call to school officials; (2) uses a hand-
94 held mobile telephone as provided in subparagraph (A) of subdivision
95 (4) of subsection (b) of this section; (3) uses a hand-held mobile
96 telephone or mobile electronic device in a manner similar to a two-way
97 radio to allow real-time communication with a school official, an
98 emergency response operator, a hospital, physician's office or health
99 clinic, an ambulance company, a fire department or a police department;
100 or (4) uses a mobile electronic device with a video display, provided
101 such device (A) is used as a global positioning system or to provide

102 navigation, (B) is securely attached inside the school bus near such
103 person, and (C) has been approved for such use by the Department of
104 Motor Vehicles.

105 (d) No person under eighteen years of age shall use any hand-held
106 mobile telephone, including one with a hands-free accessory, or a
107 mobile electronic device while operating a motor vehicle on a public
108 highway, except as provided in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (4) of
109 subsection (b) of this section.

110 (e) No person shall use a hand-held mobile telephone or other
111 electronic device or type, read or send text or a text message with or
112 from a mobile telephone or mobile electronic device while operating a
113 commercial motor vehicle, [as defined in section 14-1,] except for the
114 purpose of communicating with any of the following regarding an
115 emergency situation: An emergency response operator; a hospital;
116 physician's office or health clinic; an ambulance company; a fire
117 department or a police department.

118 (f) Except as provided in subsections (b) to (e), inclusive, of this
119 section, no person shall engage in any activity not related to the actual
120 operation of a motor vehicle in a manner that interferes with the safe
121 operation of such vehicle on any highway. [, as defined in section 14-1.]

122 (g) Any law enforcement officer who issues a summons for a
123 violation of this section shall record on such summons the specific
124 nature of any distracted driving behavior observed by such officer.

125 (h) Any person who violates this section shall be fined two hundred
126 dollars for a first violation, three hundred seventy-five dollars for a
127 second violation and six hundred twenty-five dollars for a third or
128 subsequent violation.

129 (i) An operator of a motor vehicle who commits a moving violation,
130 as defined in subsection (a) of section 14-111g, while engaged in any
131 activity prohibited by this section shall be fined in accordance with
132 subsection (h) of this section, in addition to any penalty or fine imposed

133 for the moving violation.

134 (j) The state shall remit to a municipality twenty-five per cent of the
135 fine amount received for a violation of this section with respect to each
136 summons issued by such municipality. Each clerk of the Superior Court
137 or the Chief Court Administrator, or any other official of the Superior
138 Court designated by the Chief Court Administrator, shall, on or before
139 the thirtieth day of January, April, July and October in each year, certify
140 to the Comptroller the amount due for the previous quarter under this
141 subsection to each municipality served by the office of the clerk or
142 official.

143 (k) A record of any violation of this section shall appear on the
144 driving history record or motor vehicle record, as defined in section 14-
145 10, of any person who commits such violation, and the record of such
146 violation shall be available to any motor vehicle insurer in accordance
147 with the provisions of section 14-10.

148 Sec. 502. Subsection (d) of section 14-283b of the general statutes is
149 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
150 *1, 2025*):

151 (d) (1) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (b) of
152 this section shall have committed an infraction, except that if such
153 violation results in the injury of the operator or any occupant of an
154 emergency vehicle, such person shall be fined not more than [two
155 thousand five hundred] ten thousand dollars and, if such violation
156 results in the death of the operator or any occupant of an emergency
157 vehicle, such person shall be fined not more than [ten] twenty thousand
158 dollars.

159 (2) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (c) of this
160 section shall have committed an infraction.

161 Sec. 503. Subsection (f) of section 14-212d of the general statutes is
162 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*
163 *1, 2025*):

164 (f) Upon conviction or a plea of guilty for committing the offense of
165 aggravated endangerment of a highway worker, a person shall be
166 subject to a fine of (1) not more than ~~[five]~~ ten thousand dollars if such
167 offense results in serious physical injury to a highway worker, or (2)
168 ~~[ten]~~ twenty thousand dollars if such offense results in the death of a
169 highway worker, in addition to any other penalty authorized by law."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Sec. 501	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	14-296aa
Sec. 502	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	14-283b(d)
Sec. 503	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	14-212d(f)