
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 484 (File 591, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING DISTRACTED DRIVING AND THE SAFE OPERATION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE IN A HIGHWAY WORK ZONE.

SUMMARY

This bill makes it a per se (by its very nature) reckless driving violation to drive in a highway work zone while engaged in any activity prohibited under the state's distracted driving law.

Existing law prohibits driving recklessly for the surroundings and conditions (such as road layout or weather). It specifies certain circumstances that constitute reckless driving per se, including driving more than 85 mph. The bill expands these per se reckless driving violations to include driving a motor vehicle in a highway work zone while engaging in any activity the state's existing distracted driving law prohibits.

Under existing law, reckless driving is an unclassified misdemeanor, subject to a fine, up to 30 days (first violation) or up to 364 days (subsequent violations) imprisonment, or both. The fine for reckless driving in a work zone is generally \$200-\$600 for a first violation and up to \$1,200 for subsequent violations. The fine for distracted driving in a work zone is \$400 for a first violation, \$750 for a second violation, and \$1,250 for subsequent violations. These fine amounts are two times the standard amount because both violations are subject to the existing law doubling fines for various driving violations committed in a work zone.

Under the bill, a person cannot be prosecuted for both a reckless driving violation and distracted driving violation for the same offense. Under existing law, distracted driving violations are processed by the Centralized Infractions Bureau and may be processed by mail or online. Reckless driving is a crime and generally requires the violator to appear in court.

*Senate Amendment "A" eliminates a provision adding "video converters" to the list of devices specifically considered "mobile electronic devices" under the distracted driving law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

HB 5463 (File 417), favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, and sHB 5464 (File 418), as amended by House Amendments A, B, E, and F, both (1) explicitly prohibit driving while a moving image is visible to the driver, (2) reorganize and revise the distracted driving law, and (3) make distracted driving in a work zone a per se reckless driving offense.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 37 Nay 1 (03/24/2026)