



**Anchorage
Police
Department
employees
Association**

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January 24, 2012

Members of the Alaska State Legislature:

The Anchorage Police Department Employees Association (APDEA) represents over 500 rank and file employees of the Anchorage Police Department. As President of the APDEA, I am writing in support of HB 128, which would ban the use of cell phones by minors operating a motor vehicle.

APDEA members see firsthand the fatalities, injury, and property damage resulting from vehicular cell phone use by minors. Minors not only have the highest crash rates of any drivers, they are also involved in a disproportionate number of fatal accidents. When you add to the mix that minors are the most frequent cell phone users, a dangerous combination is created.

There is now a huge body of research on cell phones and driving. Studies both in this country and from places such as Canada and Australia consistently show that talking on cell phones quadruples a driver's chances of being involved in an accident. A recent study in Utah demonstrated that individuals talking on cell phones performed about as well at driving as individuals with a blood alcohol level of .08 percent. Major corporations and other large organizations have become so concerned about safety and liability that they banned on-road use of cell phones by their employees during work hours. The Harvard Center for Risk Analysis estimates that 2,600 deaths and 12,000 serious injuries occur each year in highway crashes caused by cell phone use.

Inexperienced drivers using cell phones only heightens the risk. APDEA members would love to never again respond to a serious accident involving a teenage driver talking on a cell phone. HB 128 would help achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Hsieh".

Derek Hsieh
President
APDEA