

LESSMEIER & WINTERS
LAWYERS - LLC

MICHAEL L. LESSMEIER
GREGORY W. LESSMEIER
SHELDON E. WINTERS

VINTAGE BUSINESS PARK
3000 VINTAGE BOULEVARD
SUITE 100
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

TELEPHONE: (907) 796-4999
FACSIMILE: (907) 796-4998
E-MAIL: lw@gci.net

VIA HAND DELIVERY

February 16, 2011

The Honorable Berta Gardner
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 424
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: State Farm Support for HB 128 - Ban on Cell Phone Use by Minors While Driving

Dear Representative Gardner:

State Farm strongly supports a ban on cell phone use by minors while driving. There is no doubt this bill will in fact immediately begin to save lives and prevent injuries. Drivers between the ages 16 - 19 are four times more likely to be involved in a crash as other drivers. One in five of all auto deaths is attributed to teen driving. The leading causes of teen accidents include inexperience and distraction. A recent Research Report by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm determined that 9 out of 10 teenagers reported teen use of cell phones while driving was common, and 7 out of 10 said they have observed teens driving while being emotionally upset using a cell phone. That same survey indicated legal prohibitions and restrictions were the top motivations teens said would keep them from using a cell phone while driving.

As the insurance industry representative on the Alaska Highway Safety Improvement Program, State Farm thanks you for sponsoring this bill. Through an alliance with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, State Farm has access to a wealth of information and resources should you or other members of the Legislature desire. If we can provide you any information or assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Sheldon E. Winters
Lobbyist for State Farm Insurance Companies

SEW/lg

Gardner 02-16-11 letter of support.wpd