

Second Regular Session  
Seventy-third General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

**PREAMENDED**

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee  
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 22-0969.01 Jery Payne x2157

**SENATE BILL 22-175**

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**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Hansen and Fields**, Coram

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**(None)**,

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**Senate Committees**

Transportation & Energy  
Appropriations

**House Committees**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

101 **CONCERNING THE USE OF MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHEN**  
102 **DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,**  
103 **MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.**

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**Bill Summary**

*(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)*

Current law prohibits a person who is under 18 years of age from using a mobile electronic device when driving. The bill applies the prohibition to a person who is 18 years of age or older unless the person is using a hands-free accessory. The following uses are exempted:

- By a person reporting an emergency to state or local

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

- authorities;
- By an employee or contractor of a utility services provider when responding to a utility emergency;
- By a person operating a commercial truck when using a mobile data terminal that transmits and receives data;
- By a first responder; or
- By a person in a motor vehicle that is lawfully parked.

The penalties for a violation are:

- For a first offense, \$150 and 2 license suspension points;
- For a second offense within 24 months, \$250 and 3 license suspension points; and
- For a third or subsequent offense within 24 months, \$500 and 4 license suspension points.

It is an affirmative defense to a violation if the defendant has not previously committed a violation, produces proof of purchase of a hands-free accessory, and affirms, under penalty of perjury, that the defendant has not previously claimed this affirmative defense.

Current law requires a peace officer who makes a traffic stop to record the demographic information of the violator, whether a citation has been issued, and the violation cited. The bill clarifies that the peace officer must record whether the bill has been violated.

A peace officer is prohibited from stopping a driver or issuing a citation for a violation of the bill unless the officer visually observes the operator using, holding, or physically supporting with any part of the person's body the mobile electronic device.

The executive director of the department of transportation, in consultation with the chief of the Colorado state patrol, will create a campaign raising public awareness of the requirements of the bill and of the dangers of using mobile electronic devices when driving.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2           **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **repeal and reenact,**  
 3 **with amendments,** 42-4-239 as follows:

4           **42-4-239. Use of a mobile electronic device - definitions -**  
 5 **penalty - preemption - legislative declaration.** (1) AS USED IN THIS  
 6 SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

7           (a) "EMERGENCY" MEANS A SITUATION IN WHICH A PERSON:

8           (I) HAS REASON TO FEAR FOR THE PERSON'S LIFE OR SAFETY OR

1 BELIEVES THAT A CRIMINAL ACT MAY BE PERPETRATED AGAINST THE  
2 PERSON OR ANOTHER PERSON, REQUIRING THE USE OF A MOBILE  
3 ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHEN THE PERSON IS DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE; OR

4 (II) REPORTS A FIRE, A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT IN WHICH ONE OR MORE  
5 INJURIES ARE APPARENT, A SERIOUS ROAD HAZARD, A MEDICAL OR  
6 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY, OR A PERSON WHO IS DRIVING IN A  
7 RECKLESS, CARELESS, OR OTHERWISE UNSAFE MANNER.

8 (b) "FIRST RESPONDER" MEANS:

9 (I) A PEACE OFFICER, AS DESCRIBED IN SECTION 16-2.5-101;

10 (II) A FIREFIGHTER, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 29-5-203 (10);

11 (III) A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER, AS DEFINED IN SECTION  
12 31-30-1102 (9)(a);

13 (IV) AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PROVIDER, AS DEFINED IN  
14 SECTION 25-3.5-103 (8); OR

15 (V) ANY OTHER PERSON WHO RESPONDS IN A PROFESSIONAL  
16 CAPACITY TO A PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCY.

17 (c) "HANDS-FREE ACCESSORY" MEANS AN ACCESSORY WITH A  
18 FEATURE OR FUNCTION THAT ENABLES A PERSON TO USE A MOBILE  
19 ELECTRONIC DEVICE WITHOUT USING EITHER HAND, EXCEPT TO ACTIVATE,  
20 DEACTIVATE, OR INITIATE THE FEATURE OR FUNCTION WITH A SINGLE  
21 TOUCH OR SINGLE SWIPE.

22 (d) (I) "MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE" MEANS A HANDHELD OR  
23 PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING VOICE  
24 COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TWO OR MORE PERSONS, AMUSEMENT, OR  
25 WIRELESS DATA.

26 (II) "MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE" DOES NOT INCLUDE:

27 (A) A RADIO, CITIZENS BAND RADIO, OR CITIZENS BAND RADIO

1 HYBRID;

2 (B) A COMMERCIAL TWO-WAY RADIO COMMUNICATION DEVICE OR

3 ITS FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT;

4 (C) A SUBSCRIPTION-BASED EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

5 DEVICE;

6 (D) A PRESCRIBED MEDICAL DEVICE;

7 (E) AN AMATEUR OR HAM RADIO DEVICE; OR

8 (F) AN IN-VEHICLE SECURITY, NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS, OR

9 REMOTE DIAGNOSTICS SYSTEM.

10 (e) "USE" OR "USING" MEANS:

11 (I) PHYSICALLY HOLDING OR SUPPORTING A MOBILE ELECTRONIC

12 DEVICE WITH ANY PART OF THE BODY; EXCEPT THAT A PERSON MAY USE

13 AN EARPIECE OR HEADPHONE DEVICE TO CONDUCT A VOICE-BASED

14 COMMUNICATION;

15 (II) WATCHING A VIDEO OR MOVIE ON A MOBILE ELECTRONIC

16 DEVICE, OTHER THAN WATCHING DATA RELATED TO THE NAVIGATION OF

17 THE MOTOR VEHICLE; OR

18 (III) WRITING, SENDING, OR READING TEXT-BASED

19 COMMUNICATION, INCLUDING A TEXT MESSAGE, INSTANT MESSAGE,

20 E-MAIL, OR INTERNET DATA ON A MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE; EXCEPT

21 THAT TEXT-BASED COMMUNICATION DOES NOT INCLUDE:

22 (A) A VOICE-BASED COMMUNICATION THAT IS AUTOMATICALLY

23 CONVERTED BY THE MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE TO BE SENT AS A

24 MESSAGE IN WRITTEN FORM; OR

25 (B) COMMUNICATION CONCERNING THE NAVIGATION OF A MOTOR

26 VEHICLE.

27 (2) (a) EXCEPT AS SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (2)(b) OF THIS

1 SECTION, A PERSON UNDER EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE SHALL NOT DRIVE A  
2 MOTOR VEHICLE WHEN USING A MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE.

3 (b) IT IS NOT A VIOLATION OF THIS SUBSECTION (2) TO USE A  
4 MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE:

5 (I) TO CONTACT A PUBLIC SAFETY ENTITY; OR

6 (II) DURING AN EMERGENCY.

7 (3) (a) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (3)(b) OF THIS  
8 SECTION, A PERSON EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER SHALL NOT DRIVE  
9 A MOTOR VEHICLE WHEN USING A MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE UNLESS THE  
10 USE IS THROUGH A HANDS-FREE ACCESSORY.

11 (b) IT IS NOT A VIOLATION OF THIS SUBSECTION (3) TO USE A  
12 MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICE:

13 (I) WHEN REPORTING AN EMERGENCY TO STATE OR LOCAL  
14 AUTHORITIES;

15 (II) WHEN AN EMPLOYEE OR CONTRACTOR OF A UTILITY SERVICES  
16 PROVIDER IS ACTING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE EMPLOYEE'S OR  
17 CONTRACTOR'S DUTIES WHEN RESPONDING TO A UTILITY EMERGENCY;

18 (III) WHEN OPERATING A COMMERCIAL TRUCK AND USING A  
19 MOBILE DATA TERMINAL THAT TRANSMITS AND RECEIVES DATA;

20 (IV) DURING THE PERFORMANCE OF A FIRST RESPONDER'S OFFICIAL  
21 DUTIES; OR

22 (V) WHEN IN A MOTOR VEHICLE THAT IS     PARKED.

23 (4) (a) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED FOR IN SUBSECTION (4)(b) OF THIS  
24 SECTION, A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION COMMITS A  
25 MISDEMEANOR TRAFFIC OFFENSE. UPON CONVICTION, THE COURT SHALL  
26 ASSESS:

27 (I) A FINE OF UP TO SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS IF THE DEFENDANT

1 HAS NOT VIOLATED THIS SECTION WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING  
2 TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS, AS MEASURED FROM THE DATE OF ANY PREVIOUS  
3 CONVICTION TO THE DATE OF THE CURRENT CONVICTION;

4 (II) A FINE OF UP TO ONE HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS FOR A SECOND  
5 CONVICTION WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING TWENTY-FOUR  
6 MONTHS, AS MEASURED FROM THE DATE OF ANY PREVIOUS CONVICTION TO  
7 THE DATE OF THE CURRENT CONVICTION; AND

8 (III) A FINE OF UP TO TWO HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS FOR A THIRD  
9 OR SUBSEQUENT CONVICTION WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING  
10 TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS, AS MEASURED FROM THE DATE OF THE FIRST  
11 PREVIOUS CONVICTION TO THE DATE OF THE CURRENT CONVICTION.

12 (b) IT IS AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO A VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION  
13 (3)(a) OF THIS SECTION IF THE DEFENDANT:

14 ==

15 (I) PRODUCES IN COURT A HANDS-FREE ACCESSORY OR PROOF OF  
16 PURCHASE OF A HANDS-FREE ACCESSORY; AND

17 (II) AFFIRMS, UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY, THAT THE DEFENDANT  
18 HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY CLAIMED THE AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE AUTHORIZED  
19 IN THIS SUBSECTION (4)(b).

20 (c) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A PERSON WITH A  
21 COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE WHO IS OPERATING A COMMERCIAL  
22 VEHICLE.

23 (5) (a) WHEN A PEACE OFFICER ISSUES A CITATION FOR A  
24 VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION, THE PEACE OFFICER SHALL, WHEN  
25 COMPLYING WITH SECTION 24-31-309 (3.5), RECORD THAT THE PERSON  
26 WAS ISSUED A CITATION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION.

27 (b) A PEACE OFFICER SHALL NOT STOP A DRIVER OR ISSUE THE

1 DRIVER A CITATION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION UNLESS THE  
2 OFFICER VISUALLY OBSERVES THE DRIVER USING THE MOBILE ELECTRONIC  
3 DEVICE.

4 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 43-1-131 as  
5 follows:

6 **43-1-131. Mobile electronic device education - repeal.** (1) BY  
7 OCTOBER 1, 2022, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR THE EXECUTIVE  
8 DIRECTOR'S DESIGNEE SHALL, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CHIEF OF THE  
9 COLORADO STATE PATROL, CREATE A CAMPAIGN RAISING PUBLIC  
10 AWARENESS OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 42-4-239 AND OF THE  
11 DANGERS OF USING MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHEN DRIVING.

12 (2) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024.

13 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 42-2-127, **amend**  
14 (5)(jj) and (5)(jj.5); and **add** (5)(jj.7) as follows:

15 **42-2-127. Authority to suspend license - to deny license - type**  
16 **of conviction - points.** (5) Point system schedule:

Type of conviction	Points
(jj) A violation of section 42-4-239 <del>(2)</del> IF THE PERSON HAS NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF THE SAME VIOLATION WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 24 MONTHS . . . . .	± 2
(jj.5) A SECOND violation of section 42-4-239 WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 24 MONTHS . . . . .	4 3
(jj.7) A THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION OF SECTION 42-4-239 WITHIN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING 24 MONTHS . . . . .	4

25 **SECTION 4. Appropriation.** (1) For the 2022-23 state fiscal  
26 year, \$23,941 is appropriated to the department of revenue. This  
27 appropriation is from the Colorado DRIVES Vehicle Services Account

1 in the Highway Users Tax Fund created in section 42-1-211 (2)(b)(I),  
2 C.R.S. To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation  
3 as follows:

4 (a) \$18,900 for DRIVES maintenance and support;

5 (b) \$3,168 for the purchase of information technology services;

6 and

7 (c) \$1,873 for use by the executive director's office for personal  
8 services.

9 (2) For the 2022-23 state fiscal year, \$ 3,168 is appropriated to the  
10 office of the governor for use by the office of information technology.  
11 This appropriation is from reappropriated funds received from the  
12 department of revenue under subsection (1)(b) of this section. To  
13 implement this act, the office may use this appropriation to provide  
14 information technology services for the department of revenue.

15 **SECTION 5. Act subject to petition - effective date -**  
16 **applicability.** (1) This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following  
17 the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the  
18 general assembly; except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant  
19 to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an  
20 item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item,  
21 section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the  
22 general election to be held in November 2022 and, in such case, will take  
23 effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the  
24 governor.

25 (2) This act applies to offenses committed on or after January 1,  
26 2023.