

**Remarks by Anne S. Ferro
FMCSA Administrator
“Decide to Drive” Press Conference
American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons & Orthopedic Trauma
Association
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Introduction

Good morning, everyone. Dr. Berry and Dr. Pollak, Thank you for inviting me to join you in support of your campaign to end distracted driving. It’s a pleasure to be here with you and my great colleague in safety, NHTSA Administrator David Strickland.

Orthopedic doctors are healers. You put bones and limbs back together after crashes. And you know first hand the devastation a person suffers in a vehicle crash. We are grateful to be in your company and hopeful that our partnership will make a meaningful difference in getting drivers to keep eyes, and minds on the road and their hands on the wheel.

Safety is the Number One priority of the Department and the Number One mission of FMCSA. We regulate more than 500,000 trucking companies and 4,000 tour bus companies, together, they employ more than three million interstate CDL drivers operating vehicles that can weigh 10 to 40 tons.

Distracted Driving

Driving while distracted is dangerous driving. Drivers who send and receive text messages take their eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds out of every 6 seconds while texting. At 55 miles per hour, this means that the driver is traveling the length of a football field, including the end zones, without looking at the road.

FMCSA is meeting this epidemic head on. Last year we issued a new safety regulation that bans texting for commercial truck and bus drivers. Now we have a new proposed rule that would ban hand-held cell phone use for commercial drivers. Together, these rules go a long way toward keeping a driver's full attention focused on the road.

On our Distraction.gov web site you can read about a 13-year-old girl named Margay[mar-gay] Schee. She was a good student. Margay liked animals and was a great all around kid.

She was one of 21 students on their way home from school – on a school bus stopped at a bus stop. The bus was rear ended by a truck going 60 mph. The truck driver never saw the school bus – he was talking on a cell phone.

The bus caught fire and Margay was trapped underneath the bus and was killed in that fire. The year she died – 2008 – nearly 6,000 men, women and children were killed because of distracted driving.

Conclusion

Thank you Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons and Orthopedic Trauma Doctors for making the issue of distracted driving your own. Thank you for reaching out to make a difference.

You know as we do, that every trip matters. Every driver matters.

We want safe driving for everyone and are committed to working with safety-conscious organizations like yours as well as with commercial truck and bus companies and drivers. Thank you all.