

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Kansas House Transportation Committee Testimony Regarding Hand-held Electronic Devices while Driving

Chairman Proehl and Members of the Committee,

Thank You for allowing us the Opportunity to share the story of Austin's Texting and Driving Crash.

I speak on Austin's behalf, due to the severity of his Tramatic Brain Injury. Austin was in a Texting and Driving Crash. He sustained multiple injuries, the worst was his Traumatic Brain Injury. We have lived this nightmare for 7 years now. We were those parents that received that phone call in the middle of the night!! We were told to go the ER at St Francis Hospital. When we got there, we were met by a Chaplain! I thought my child was dead! Eventually we were told he was in Surgical Intensive Care. That is where our nightmare began! Due to a Text! Austin spent 26 days in SICU! Austin had to have surgery. Before that surgery, we were asked a question, if Austin does not survive the surgery, do you want to donate his organs?! We should not have had to make that decision for my 19 year old child!

Austin is now 26, he will turn 27 in March. Austin continues therapies every day which includes Speech, Occupational, Cognitive Therapies. We have also hired a personal trainer. My husband and I have done everything humanly possible to get our son back! We are very blessed that he survived!

Through Austin's High School and College years he was very well liked. Austin received an Academic and Athletic Scholarship to Friends University in Wichita. While Austin was in rehabilitation his high school and college buddies moved on. It is sad to tell you that his best friend is his mom!

His friends moved on with achieving their Bachelors degrees, Marriage, Careers and kids. Their lives have continued while Austin still struggles with verbal communication.

Main objective: No matter the Text, no matter the phone call, it's not worth someone's life or injury.

If you must take a phone call or answer a text, move your vehicle completely out of the line of vision to other vehicles. Officers are putting their lives on the line to keep you safe. Data shows people are drawn to the flashing lights. We are losing to many of our law enforcement due to distracted driving!

Think about this; your distracted or your texting and driving, you hit a vehicle, and you severely injure someone?

Or, there is a fatality!!

A mom, dad, sister, brother, or even a grandparent. What do you think the consequences will be?

Let's see how many lives we can save!

The choice is yours and yours only!! Set an example for someone else. Be that better person by

putting your phone down and save a life! It is vital that we get the hands-free bill into law!! Help us to save lives! Help Austin to tell his story. Even if it saves just one life! The Hands Free Bill could save many!

Julie Breitenstein,
Austin Breitenstein

Austin's Story
Don't Text and Drive
Stop the Epidemic
jewelsbreit@cox.net/
julie_breitenstein@yahoo.com
316-250-6977 Cell
316-721-0801 Home
Wichita, Kansas 67205

