

## **U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood: North Dakota Becomes 31st State to Ban Texting While Driving**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today praised North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple for signing a tough new law banning texting while driving. The law makes North Dakota the 31st state to ban texting behind the wheel.

“North Dakota has taken an important step to eliminate distracted driving,” said Secretary LaHood. “Thanks to the bill signed today by Governor Dalrymple, North Dakota roads will be safer for everyone.”

The new law, which becomes effective August 1, will impose a fine of \$100 on people caught texting while driving.

With the addition of North Dakota, 31 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam have now banned text messaging by all drivers. Eight states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands have prohibited all hand-held cell phone use while driving.

In 2009, Secretary LaHood launched a national anti-distracted driving campaign modeled on other successful NHTSA efforts to reduce fatalities, such as its *Over the Limit Under Arrest* and *Click It Or Ticket* campaigns to curb drunk driving and increase seat belt use. The U.S. DOT has launched a dedicated website, [Distraction.gov](http://Distraction.gov), to provide the public with a comprehensive source of information on distracted driving. DOT has also hosted two national summits devoted to the issue, crafted sample legislation which states can use to adopt distracted driving laws, and initiated pilot law enforcement programs in Hartford, CT and Syracuse, NY.

In November, the Department of Transportation announced “Faces of Distracted Driving,” a video series featuring people from across the country who have been injured or lost loved ones in distracted driving crashes. To watch videos from the “Faces of Distracted Driving” series or learn more about the U.S. Department of Transportation’s campaign against distracted driving, visit [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).