



News  
Release

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## **Michigan Becomes 24th State to Ban Texting and Driving *Nearly Half of States Now Make Dangerous Act Illegal***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) congratulates Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm, the State Legislature and the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning as that state becomes the 24th to ban texting by all drivers. Washington State was the first to enact a ban in May of 2007.

Governor Granholm's signing of the texting legislation is being included in a special "No Phone Zone Day" episode of the Oprah Winfrey show airing nationwide today. Winfrey and Harpo Studios are urging viewers to pledge to put down their cell phones and not drive distracted. The online pledge can be found at [www.oprah.com/nophonezone](http://www.oprah.com/nophonezone).

Highway Safety Offices in approximately 30 states are participating in "No Phone Zone Day" by issuing news releases, sponsoring community events and posting signage on interstates. Yesterday, for example, the North Dakota Department of Transportation held an event in the state capitol urging the crowd to sign the pledge. Today, Department of Motor Vehicle offices in New York are carrying the "No Phone Zone Day" message on video monitors.

GHSA notes that Ms. Winfrey's and Harpo's involvement will likely lead to more states passing texting bans. In fact, legislation is already awaiting governors' signatures in Georgia and Wisconsin. GHSA Executive Director Barbara Harsha notes, "Clearly Oprah's involvement is giving new momentum to the effort to address distracted driving. In the next year, it is possible that another 10-15 states will enact texting bans. Oprah's support and leadership along with the passionate advocacy of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood may be just what is needed to get some of these laws passed more quickly and help save lives."

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