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FOR RELEASE ON RECEIPT

February 1, 2018

FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition Praises House Committees for Sending Texting While Driving Legislation to House Floor

HB 33 Passes Last Committee Stop; Heads to Full House

Tallahassee, Fla. — The FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition, consisting of numerous law enforcement organizations, local governments, an Florida-based businesses and individuals, today praised the House Government Accountability Committee for advancing House Bill 33 to the House floor. The legislation, sponsored by Representatives Jackie Toledo (R-Tampa) and Emily Slosberg (D-Boca Raton), as well as cosponsored by more than 50 House members, would make texting while driving a primary offense.

"On behalf of the FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition, we are thrilled the members of the House Government Accountability Committee have advanced this very heart-felt piece of legislation to the House floor," said Keyna Cory, coordinator for the FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition. "While we haven't crossed the finish line yet, we are overwhelmed by the support the Speaker and members of the Florida House have given to this bipartisan bill that will save lives."

According to the National Safety Council, more than 100,000 crashes a year involve drivers who are texting, causing life-changing injuries and deaths.

"PCI commends Representatives Toledo and Slosberg, along with the more than 50 House members who have signed on in support of this good policy, as well as House leadership, for being the driving force behind this life-changing legislation that will be just as impactful as the seat belt law was when it passed," said Logan McFaddin, the Property Casualty Insurers Association of America (PCI) regional manager. "We're glad to see HB 33 advance to the full House, where it will give Florida the opportunity to make our roads safer and reverse the double-digit spikes we're seeing with distracted-driving related crashes."

"As Miss Florida Teen USA 2018, my mission this year has been sharing with my peers the important message of Stay Alive - Don't Text and Drive," said Miss Florida Teen USA 2018 Lou Schieffelin. "I have been looking forward to the opportunity to support Representatives Emily Slosberg and Jackie Toledo and House Bill 33. With the passing of this new law, I know we will all be part of the crusade to save lives and eliminate DWI's - driving while inTEXTicated."

The Wanninkhof family of Key Biscayne, Florida, has traveled to Tallahassee for every House and Senate committee meeting of House Bill 33 and Senate Bill 90 to make texting while driving a primary offense. The Wanninkhof's lost their son, Patrick, because of the negligence of a cell phone distracted driver. "Our lives have been shattered because of the loss of Patrick," said Debbie Wanninkhof. "We are determined to save others through our efforts of supporting these bills until they become law."

HB 33 would strengthen the current ban on texting, emailing, and instant messaging while driving, by changing the current enforcement of the ban from secondary to primary. It is now available for consideration by the full House.

The FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition includes Florida businesses, associations, law enforcement, local governments, trade and medical organizations as well as the AARP, AAA and the Florida PTA. For more information about the FL DNT TXT N DRV Coalition, please visit FLDontTextandDrive.com.

PCI promotes and protects the viability of a competitive private insurance market for the benefit of consumers and insurers. PCI is composed of nearly 1,000 member companies, representing the broadest cross section of insurers of any national trade association. PCI members write \$220 billion in annual premium, 37 percent of the nation's property casualty insurance. Member companies write 44 percent of the U.S. automobile insurance market, 30 percent of the homeowners market, 35 percent of the commercial property and liability market and 37 percent of the private workers compensation market.

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