



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 20-0016
Prime Sponsors: Sen. Hansen, Rep. Roberts

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Bill Status: Senate Transportation
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Bill Topic: LIMIT MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES WHILE DRIVING

- Summary of Fiscal Impact: State Revenue, State Expenditure, State Transfer, TABOR Refund, Local Government, Statutory Public Entity

This bill makes using a mobile electronic device while driving a class A traffic infraction. The bill increases state and local revenue and expenditures on an ongoing basis.

Appropriation Summary: In FY 2020-21, the bill requires an appropriation of \$9,000 to the Department of Revenue.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under SB 20-065

Table with 4 columns: Category, Sub-category, FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22. Rows include Revenue (State Highway Fund, Crime Victim Compensation Fund, Total), Expenditures, Transfers, and TABOR Refund.

Summary of Legislation

Under current law, drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from using a mobile electronic device while driving, while drivers over 18 are prohibited from texting and driving. This bill prohibits the use of a mobile electronic device while driving for all drivers unless the driver is contacting a public safety entity, there is an emergency, or the driver is using a hands-free accessory and over the age of 18.

Use of mobile device. Under current law, a driver under the age of 18 commits a class A traffic infraction and is subject to a \$50 fine for using a mobile device while driving, and a \$100 fine for a second offense. By expanding the prohibition on using mobile devices while driving, this bill eliminates the minor offense and imposes, for all drivers, a fine of up to \$50 and 2 points to their driver license; a \$100 fine and 2 points issued for a second offense; and a fine of \$200 and 4 points issued for a third or subsequent offense.

Texting and driving. If a driver of any age is using a mobile device to engage in a text message, the person commits a class 2 misdemeanor traffic offense and must be assessed a fine of \$300 and 4 points on their driver license.

Comparable Crime

Legislative Council Staff is required to include certain information in the fiscal note for any bill that creates a new crime, changes the classification of an existing crime, or changes an element of the existing crime that creates a new factual basis for the offense.

Use of wireless devices under 18. This bill increases the offense for texting and driving when the driver is under the age of 18 from class A traffic infraction to a class 2 misdemeanor traffic offense and applies the prohibition of using a mobile phone while driving, which is a class A traffic infraction, to all persons. Under current law, an infraction for using a mobile phone while driving is punishable by a \$50 fine for a first offense and \$100 for a second. In the last three fiscal years, 291 minors were sentenced for using a wireless phone while driving with 9 sentenced for a second offense. This amounts to about 97 sentences per year, with 3 second offenses per year. Of all minors sentenced for texting and driving, 118 were male, 79 were female, and 94 did not have gender identified. Demographically, 176 were White, 11 were African American, 5 were Hispanic, 2 were Asian, 2 where race was listed as other, and 95 did not have race information available.

Adult texting and driving. This bill adds a class A traffic offense for using any electronic mobile device while driving. Currently, an adult who texts and drives commits a class 2 misdemeanor traffic offense, punishable by a \$300 fine, 10 to 90 days imprisonment, or both. In the last three fiscal years, 595 adults were sentenced for texting and driving. Of these sentences, 294 were male, 236 were female, and 65 did not have gender information available. Demographically, 483 were White, 21 were African American, 21 were Hispanic, 6 were Asian, 1 race listed as other, and 63 did not have race information available. Only 1 adult sentence resulted in jail time.

Class 1 misdemeanor traffic offense. The bill eliminates the class 1 misdemeanor traffic offense for an adult who texts and drives and causes bodily injury or death. Under current law, this misdemeanor traffic offense is punishable by 10 to 365 days in jail, a fine between \$300 and \$1,000, or both. Since June 1, 2017, when the law took effect, there have been zero sentences.

Assumptions

The fiscal note makes the following assumptions based on the comparable crime data above:

Sentences for minors

- there will be 73 sentences for texting and driving per year for minors;
- of those sentences, 71 will be for a first offense and 2 will be for a second offense;
- there will be 24 sentences for using a mobile phone while driving; and
- of those cases, 22 will be for a first offense, 1 will be a second offense, and 1 will be a third offense.

Sentences for adults

- there will be at least a 50 percent increase, or 100 new class A traffic infractions per year for using a mobile device and driving;
- there will be 5 sentences per year for a second violation for driving while using a mobile phone;
- there will be an average of 1 sentence per year for a third offense for driving while using a mobile phone;
- for FY 2020-21, any second violations for using a mobile device and driving will not occur until halfway through FY 2020-21, resulting in 2 sentences in FY 2020-21 and 5 sentences in FY 2021-22; and
- that the adult third violation for using a mobile device while driving will happen in FY 2021-22.

Visit leg.colorado.gov/fiscalnotes for more information about criminal justice costs in fiscal notes.

State Revenue

The bill increases state cash fund revenue by \$23,450 in the FY 2020-21 and \$23,950 in FY 2021-22. Revenue increases from fine revenue are credited to the Highway User Tax Fund (HUTF), while surcharges paid on each fine are credited to the Crime Victim Compensation Fund. HUTF revenue is outlined in Table 2 and revenue to the Crime Victim Compensation Fund is outlined in Table 4. Revenue impacts to each fund are discussed below.

Highway Users Tax Fund. Raising the fine for minors convicted of texting and driving by \$250 for a first offense and \$200 for a second offense, as well as increasing the fine for using mobile devices while driving by \$100 for a third offense, as well as creating a new class A traffic infraction will increase revenue to the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF). For each violation, an individual pays a fine that is credited to the HUTF, as outlined in Table 2. As outlined in the Comparable Crime and Assumption sections, this bill results in a revenue increase to the HUTF of \$23,450 in FY 2020-21 and by \$23,950 in FY 2021-22. Table 3 shows how HUTF revenue will be distributed to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), counties, and municipalities. Revenue to the HUTF is subject to TABOR.

Table 2
Revenue to Highway User Tax Fund Under SB 20-065

Fiscal Year	Type of Fee	Change in Fine under SB 20-065	Number Affected	Total Fee Impact
FY 2020-21	Minor-Texting and Driving 1st Offense (Class 2 misdemeanor)	\$250	71	\$17,750
	Minor- Texting and Driving 2nd Offense (Class 2 misdemeanor)	\$200	2	\$400
	Minor- Using Phone 3rd Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$100	1	\$100
	Adult- Using Phone 1st Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$50	100	\$5,000
	Adult- Using Phone 2nd Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$100	2	\$200
FY 2020-21 Total				\$23,450
FY 2021-22	Minor-Texting and Driving 1st Offense (Class 2 misdemeanor)	\$250	71	\$17,750
	Minor- Texting and Driving 2nd Offense (Class 2 misdemeanor)	\$200	2	\$400
	Minor- Using Phone 3rd Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$100	1	\$100
	Adult- Using Phone 1st Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$50	100	\$5,000
	Adult- Using Phone 2nd Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$100	5	\$500
	Adult- Using Phone 3rd Offense (Class A Infraction)	\$200	1	\$200
FY 2021-22 Total				\$23,950

Table 3
HUTF Distribution Under SB 20-065

HUTF Distribution	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21
State Highway Fund (65 percent)	\$15,243	\$15,568
Counties (26 percent)	\$6,097	\$6,227
Municipalities (9 percent)	\$2,110	\$2,155
Total	\$23,450	\$23,950

Judicial Department. Cash fund revenue to the Judicial Department will increase from the \$6 surcharge as a result of an increase of class A traffic infractions credited to the Crime Victim Compensation Fund. This amount is estimated to be \$612 in FY 2020-21 and \$636 in FY 2021-22 and is outlined in Table 4. Revenue to the Crime Victim Compensation Fund is subject to TABOR.

Table 4
Revenue to Crime Victim Compensation Fund Under SB 20-065

Fiscal Year	Cash Funds	Surcharge	Number Affected	Total
FY 2020-21	Adult- Class A traffic Infraction	\$6	102	\$612
FY 2021-22	Adult- Class A traffic Infraction	\$6	106	\$636

State Expenditures

In FY 2020-21, state cash fund expenditures will increase by \$9,000. In addition, Judicial Department workload will increase as described below.

Department of Revenue — computer programming. In FY 2020-21 only, the Department of Revenue (DOR) expenditures will increase by \$9,000 from the DRIVES Vehicle Services Account to program its DRIVES system. Programming is necessary to create a new common code for the new citation and configure the new fees, and points with each citation. Programming costs are calculated at 40 hours at a rate of \$225 per hour.

Judicial Department. Workload in the Judicial Department will increase beginning in FY 2019-20 to hear an increase of cases as a result of the bill. The department's workload model estimates that one county court judicial officer can process approximately 2,708 misdemeanor cases and 14,154 traffic infraction cases per year. Using the recent citations issued, as discussed in the Comparable Crimes section, the fiscal note assumes that this workload impact will be minimal and no change in appropriations is required.

TABOR refunds. The bill is expected to increase state General Fund obligations for TABOR refunds by \$23,450 in FY 2020-21 and \$23,950 in FY 2021-22. Under current law and the December 2019 Legislative Council Staff forecast, the bill will correspondingly increase the amount refunded to taxpayers via sales tax refunds made available on income tax returns for tax years 2021 and 2022, respectively. A forecast of state revenue subject to TABOR is not available beyond FY 2021-22.

Local Government

Beginning in FY 2020-21, this bill will increase local government revenues and expenditures, as discussed below.

HUTF fine revenue. The bill will increase local government HUTF revenue generated by traffic fines for transportation needs, as outlined in Table 3.

District and city attorneys. District attorneys will see an increase in workloads to prosecute traffic misdemeanors. Since these new offenses can be handled with other traffic offenses, the expected increase in workload is assumed to be minimal. Traffic offenses prosecuted in a municipal court will similarly increase revenue and workload for that particular municipality.

Denver County. Similar to state-funded courts, the bill will increase revenue, expenditures and workload for the Denver County Court, which is managed and funded by the City and County of Denver.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect July 1, 2020, and applies to offenses committed on or after this date.

State Appropriations

For FY 2020-21, this bill requires an appropriation of \$9,000 to the Department of Revenue from the DRIVES Vehicle Services Account.

State and Local Government Contacts

Counties	District Attorneys	Judicial
Municipalities	Public Safety	Revenue
Sheriffs	Transportation	