

# ASSEMBLY, No. 2499

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 1, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman NANCY F. MUNOZ**

**District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)**

**Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY**

**District 7 (Burlington)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman McKnight and Assemblyman Karabinchak**

**SYNOPSIS**

Creates Task Force on Driver Distractions.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/26/2019)**

1 AN ACT creating a task force on distracted driving.

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3 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
4 *of New Jersey:*

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6 1. The Legislature finds that the increased use of technological  
7 devices in today's fast-paced, multi-tasking society has created  
8 distractions for drivers in New Jersey, thereby compromising the  
9 safety of those using the roads and highways.

10 The Legislature further finds that the study and examination of  
11 the hazards of distracted driving, which may encompass  
12 communications technology and non-technological activities, is a  
13 valuable endeavor that would provide recommendations to aid in  
14 protecting users of this State's roads and highways.

15 The Legislature therefore declares that it is altogether fitting and  
16 proper, and within the public interest, to create a task force to study  
17 and make recommendations concerning driver distractions and their  
18 impact on the safety of those who travel this State's roads and  
19 highways.

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21 2. a. There is created a task force to be known as the "Task  
22 Force on Driver Distractions" to study and make recommendations  
23 concerning the impact of driver distractions on road and highway  
24 safety.

25 b. The task force shall consist of 13 members as follows: the  
26 Commissioner of Transportation, ex officio, or a designee; the  
27 Commissioner of Education, ex officio, or a designee; the Chief  
28 Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, ex  
29 officio, or a designee; the Director of the Division of Highway  
30 Traffic Safety in the Department of Law and Public Safety, ex  
31 officio, or a designee; the Superintendent of State Police, ex officio,  
32 or a designee; a member of the County Prosecutors Association of  
33 New Jersey or a designee; a member of the New Jersey State  
34 Municipal Prosecutors Association or a designee; a member of the  
35 New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police or a designee; a  
36 member of the Insurance Council of New Jersey or a designee; a  
37 member of the Driving School Association of New Jersey or a  
38 designee; and three public members, whom shall have education or  
39 experience in highway traffic safety. The three public members  
40 shall be appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be appointed  
41 by the Governor upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the  
42 General Assembly and one of whom shall be appointed by the  
43 Governor upon the recommendation of the President of the Senate.

44 c. The members of the task force shall serve without  
45 compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses  
46 incurred in the performance of their duties to the extent that such  
47 funds are made available for that purpose.

1       3. a. The task force shall organize within 120 days after the  
2 appointment of the three public members and shall select a  
3 chairperson. The task force shall meet at the call of the  
4 chairperson.

5       b. The Division of Highway Traffic Safety shall provide  
6 professional and clerical staff to the task force as may be necessary  
7 for the task force's purposes. The task force also shall be entitled to  
8 call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees  
9 of any State department, board, bureau, commission, or agency, as  
10 it may require and as may be available for its purposes, and to  
11 employ stenographic and clerical assistance and incur traveling and  
12 other miscellaneous expenses as may be necessary in order to  
13 perform its duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or  
14 otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

15       c. Five members of the commission shall constitute a quorum  
16 for the transaction of business.

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18       4. a. The task force shall study and develop recommendations  
19 concerning the issue of driver distractions and highway safety  
20 including, but not limited to, recent communications technology and  
21 non-technological activities.

22       b. The task force shall develop recommendations for public and  
23 private strategies and recommendations for legislative or regulatory  
24 action, if deemed appropriate, to address these issues. The  
25 recommendations shall include suggestions for the development of  
26 a public information campaign to increase the public's awareness of  
27 the risks associated with driving distractions and to educate and  
28 inform motorists of methods to eliminate or minimize these risks.  
29 The task force shall also develop recommendations for improving  
30 highway and traffic safety by reducing motor vehicle accidents  
31 related to the use of communications technology in conjunction  
32 with the operation of a motor vehicle.

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34       5. Pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), the  
35 task force shall issue an interim report not more than 180 days after  
36 its organization. The task force shall submit a final report  
37 containing its findings and recommendations, including any  
38 recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that it deems  
39 appropriate, no later than one year after the task force's  
40 organizational meeting.

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42       6. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall expire 30  
43 days after the issuance of its final report.

STATEMENT

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This bill creates a task force to be known as the "Task Force on Driver Distractions" to study and make recommendations concerning the impact of driver distractions on road and highway safety.

Under the bill, the task force is to consist of 13 members. The Commissioner of Transportation, Commissioner of Education, Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission, Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the Department of Law and Public Safety, and Superintendent of State Police would serve ex-officio. A member of the County Prosecutors Association of New Jersey, New Jersey State Municipal Prosecutors Association, New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, Insurance Council of New Jersey, and Driving School Association of New Jersey also would be appointed to the task force. In addition, three public members with education or experience in highway traffic safety are to be appointed by the Governor, one of whom is to be recommended by the President of the Senate and one of whom is to be recommended by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

The task force is to organize within 120 days after the appointment of the three public members and select a chairperson. The Division of Highway Traffic Safety is to provide the necessary professional and clerical staff to the task force. Five members of the commission would constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

The task force's charge is to study and develop recommendations concerning the issue of driver distractions and highway safety including, but not limited to, electronic communication devices.

The bill requires the task force to develop recommendations for public and private strategies and for legislative or regulatory action, if deemed appropriate. The recommendations are to include suggestions for the development of a public information campaign to increase the awareness of the risks associated with driving distractions and to educate and inform motorists of methods to eliminate or minimize these risks. The task force also is required to develop recommendations for improving highway and traffic safety by reducing motor vehicle accidents related to the use of electronic communication technology in conjunction with the operation of a motor vehicle.

The task force is required to submit an interim report after six months, and a final report containing its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action, no later than one year after its organization. The task force is to expire 30 days after the issuance of the final report.