

July 10, 2015

The Honourable Suzanne Anton
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Province of British Columbia
PO Box 9044, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Hon. Minister of Justice:

Thank you for providing Doctors of BC with the opportunity to contribute feedback on the issue of distracted driving.

In 2009, Doctors of BC, formerly the BC Medical Association, submitted a formal response titled [Time to Hang Up](#), which responded to questions then posed by the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles. The recommendations made in *Time to Hang Up* remain current Doctors of BC policy on these issues.

Doctors of BC was at the forefront of advocating for laws introduced by government restricting the use of electronic devices while driving. We continue to advocate for a full ban on cell phone use while driving based on the risks to the public. Additionally, we support a graduated approach to penalties.

These recommendations were developed during a time when drivers preoccupied by phone calls were the main concern. More recent evidence exposes the dangers and risks of texting while driving. A 2014 meta-analysis of the effects of texting on driving reveals that typing and reading text messages compromises the safety of the driver, passengers, and other road users [[Caird, Johnston, Willness, Asbridge, & Steel, 2014](#)]. Physician members of the Doctors of BC's Emergency Medical Services Committee support increased efforts to not only reduce the incidences of drivers who are preoccupied with calls, but also texting, as more attention is required in this area of concern.

Doctors of BC strongly supports the government of British Columbia in its efforts to protect British Columbians from distracted drivers and urges that an evidence-based approach be undertaken on this issue. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this discussion and commend your efforts to engage partners in road safety in the development of this important work.

Sincerely,

President
Doctors of BC

