



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Governor's Advisory Committee on Driving

Under the Influence of Intoxicants

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March 15, 2021

To: House Judiciary Committee
From: Governor's Advisory Committee on DUII
Re: Support for HB 3134

Dear Chair Bynum and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Governor's Advisory Committee on DUII respectfully requests your support and passage of HB 3134. This bill replaces the word "accident" with the word "crash" in the statutory language within Oregon's Motor Vehicle Code.

For years, safety advocates have worked diligently to educate the public on the inappropriate use of the word "accident" when dealing with and describing traffic crashes and fatalities. Especially in the world of impaired driving, crashes resulting from impairment always come from decisions and choices that were made. They were not accidental. The crash was not somehow an unavoidable event, unexpected, or beyond the control of the individual driver. By calling a crash an "accident", the language itself excuses dangerous behavior and re-victimizes those most affected.

Using the word "crash" simply describes the event. It does not assign blame or motive, and nor does it excuse it. While it may seem to some like a distinction without difference, we assure you that language does indeed matter. By keeping the word "accident" in the statutory language in the Motor Vehicle Code, the state is de facto assigning the motive and intentions behind every dangerous crash and every fatality on the roadway. We ask for your help in correcting this misperception, and working to remind all Oregonians of their responsibility to drive safely and carefully.

Thank you for the opportunity to bring this bill forward and the GAC-DUII is grateful for your consideration.

Best regards,

Chuck Hayes
Chair, Governor's Advisory Committee on DUII