

# Memo

Q New Search

**Posted:**

March 27, 2018 3:55 PM

**From:**

Representative Karen Boback

**To:**

All House Members

**Subject:**

Distracted Pedestrians

**Memo:**

In the near future I plan to introduce legislation that will add a penalty for:

- Distracted pedestrians who are using an interactive communications device and suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close to constitute a hazard; and
- Distracted pedestrians who are using an interactive communications device while crossing a roadway at any point other than within a crosswalk and do not yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon that roadway.

The problem of distracted walking is a very real and serious issue. Technology has invaded every aspect of our life and people have stopped paying attention to their surroundings, and now only stare at small digital screens. People need to pay more attention, because too many are being hurt and injured in careless situations. While the below statistics don't reflect distracted walking alone, they do shed light on the dangers pedestrians face.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention:

- In 2015, 5,376 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes in the United States;
- 129,000 pedestrians were treated in emergency departments for non-fatal crash related injuries in 2015;
- Most pedestrian deaths occur in urban areas, non-intersection locations, and at night;

The issue has become such a problem that some towns, such as Fort Lee, New Jersey, have banned texting while walking. If caught texting while jaywalking in that town, violators face an \$85 fine. In London, England, some lamp posts have been padded in order to protect the large numbers of people using their mobile devices while walking. Even New York City has lowered the speed limit in some areas as a way to help cut down on the number of pedestrian injuries.

According to safety.com, "One of only a few studies focusing on the issue, it found that although pedestrian injuries overall had dropped, ER visits tripled between 2004 and 2010 for pedestrians using cell phones. The solution to distracted walking is a fairly simple one: do not use your cell phone or engage in other distracting activities while walking. Focus solely on the task at hand – getting from point A to point B in one piece and worry about checking in once you've safely arrived."

Please join me in co-sponsoring this piece of legislation.

Document No. 1

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