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Statewide texting-while-driving ban heads to full Senate

Marissa Barnett

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AUSTIN—A statewide ban on texting while driving cleared another hurdle Monday—putting the ban a step closer to becoming law than similar legislation halted in the Senate last session.

The Senate Committee on State Affairs approved the bill which would make it punishable by an up to \$200 fine for drivers caught texting. While nearly 40 Texas cities have restrictions for on-the-road cell phone use, the law would be new to Dallas drivers.

After a 5-1 committee vote, with three senators absent, the legislation now heads to the full Senate where the vote could be close, [according to committee chairwoman Sen. Joan Huffman, R-Houston](#). Senator Brian Birdwell, R-Granbury, cast the dissenting vote.

Supporters for Rep. Tom Craddick's, R-Midland, bill hope the third time's the charm. In March, the House gave the measure the green light after hours of debate over whether such a law could lead to unnecessary police stops and racial profiling.

In 2011, the Legislature approved a similar measure but then-Gov. Rick Perry vetoed it. He dismissed it as a misguided government effort to "micromanage" the behavior of adults. Last session, similar legislation was bottled up in the Senate transportation committee.

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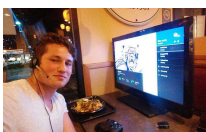
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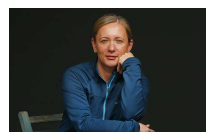
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