



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
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## **Pennsylvania's Emergency Physicians Push Additional Safety Measures for Teen Drivers**

HARRISBURG – With prom season in full swing, Pennsylvania's emergency physicians are standing behind legislative proposals they say would make the road safer for teen drivers.

"We believe that high school students should remember their prom as a happy event – not as a tragic memory that emergency physicians are often witness to," said Dr. Daniel Wehner, president of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians (PaACEP).

House Bill 67, one of two bills currently in the Pennsylvania Senate that aims to improve safety among teen drivers, would establish passenger restrictions for those younger than 18, ban the use of cell phones and texting, and require the junior driver and all occupants younger than 18 to use seat belts.

The bill is called "Lacey's Law" in honor of a Philadelphia teenager named Lacey Gallagher, who died in April 2007 after her vehicle hit a cement barrier while driving with six other teenage passengers on the way to a post-prom party.

Marlene Case of Lower Pottsgrove, whose son died in a car crash last November, joined PaACEP in support of these proposed bills. Andrew Case, 17, was one of six teenagers who were driving in an SUV on the night he died.

"We want as many parents to know our story as possible and hope that they will follow our lead by imposing stricter rules on their own children," Marlene Case said. "We know, however, that state laws go a long way in educating both parents and young people and encouraging them to think before getting behind the wheel."

Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 killer of Americans ages 15 to 20. The emergence of text messaging serves as one way for teens to become distracted behind the wheel.

To reinforce the provisions in House Bill 67, House Bill 2070 would ban the use of cell phones (except hands free) and texting while operating a vehicle. This ban would apply to everyone who drives in Pennsylvania. The bill would also require PennDOT to establish a distracted driving public education and awareness program.

With limited time available before the legislature adjourns for the primary elections, Dr. Wehner called on the Senate to quickly adopt these lifesaving components. He also encouraged the public to voice their support by writing or calling their local state senators regarding these two bills.

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PaACEP is a state chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians, a medical society representing specialists in emergency medicine. With over 1,500 members, PaACEP is committed to advancing emergency care through continuing education, research, and public education.