

**REMARKS OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL
IT CAN WAIT CAMPAIGN'S "DRIVE 4 PLEDGES DAY"
WASHINGTON, DC
SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

Good morning. It is a treat to be here today—and an honor to stand before you representing the Federal Communications Commission. It is also just exciting to share the stage with my colleagues from the Department of Transportation, not to mention Coco Jones. But I especially want to welcome the students here who have traveled to Washington from across the country, and commend them for speaking up to stop distracted driving. I also want to thank the wireless carriers—AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile—for joining their chorus and taking this issue on.

Let me start by sharing with you a single sentence.

“I can’t say go play.”

That sentence haunts. It chills. And if you haven’t seen the Werner Herzog film, “From One Second to the Next,” you may not be familiar with it. “I can’t say go play” is what Valetta, one of the stars of the film, says about her son, Xzavier.

Xzavier is no longer able to play outside.

Because he is eight years old and on life support.

Because going outside requires a suction machine and a ventilator and a wheel chair.

Because Xzavier was hit by a driver—a driver too busy texting to pay attention to the road ahead. A driver too distracted to know that the false urgency of a single text could change Xzavier’s life forever.

But Xzavier’s story is just one of thousands each year. Because according to the National Safety Council, over 100,000 automobile crashes occur every year due to distracted driving. That is an epidemic.

But these crashes—and the injuries and deaths that result—are preventable. The cure lies in education and advocacy. Because if we raise public awareness, people will know to keep off the phone when on the road.

At the Federal Communications Commission, we have been working to do our part. We now talk to elementary, middle, and high school students about the dangers of texting while driving. This year we hosted our first distracted driving technology showcase where over 400 people were in attendance and 20 exhibitors were present—including wireless carriers, software developers, and government agencies.

So we are invested at the agency where I work. But I am also invested, too. Because I am the mother of two small children, and never want to see them at risk because someone behind the wheel believes that paying attention to a text is more important than paying attention to the road.

But we need to go beyond what we do and say here in Washington today. Take the pledge to not text and drive. Talk to everyone you know about it. Get them to pledge, too. And set a good example yourself. Because if we work together and raise awareness, I bet we can do something big—we can put the brakes on distracted driving.

Thank you.