



June 20, 2011

Lee County Board of Commissioners
2120 SW Main Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dear Commissioners:

BikeWalkLee is a community coalition working for complete streets in Lee County—streets that are designed, built, operated and maintained for safety of all users. Bike Walk Lee expresses its support for the Stay Alive...Just Drive! Program and Lee County's recognition of Distracted Driving Awareness Month. We applaud the collective effort bringing focused attention to the problem of distracted driving and advocate for educational and enforcement programs conveying the message, "One Road – Many Users".

Nationally, such programs have successfully resulted in a consistent decrease in pedestrian deaths over the past decade, with 2009, the last full year of data, indicating a 7% decline. Still some 4,100 individuals were killed walking on our nations roadways and another 59,000 injured. Six hundred and thirty cyclists were killed and 51,000 injured.

We are all aware that Florida's safety record for cyclists and pedestrians is again rated one of the worst in the nation, with 22% of all traffic deaths in Florida being pedestrians or cyclists (17% pedestrians and 5% bicyclists). This, while the national average for pedestrian and cyclist traffic deaths is 12%.

This record is a distinction that ill serves all Floridians and will require a significant change of attitude, awareness, and behavior to remedy. That change can begin here, with your leadership and aggressive response to an inimical cultural shift that puts automobile primacy above that of human well-being.

As was done with the adoption and implementation of complete streets policies and the MPO Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan, Lee County can again assume regional leadership in stopping avoidable traffic deaths. We support the resolution recognizing Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and urge an adoption of a law enforcement policy of zero-tolerance for those who will not or cannot follow the rules of the road. We can protect the most vulnerable road users and instill in all Lee citizens a sense of shared responsibility for the safety and welfare of others.

Thank you for your support,
Sincerely,
Ann Pierce
On behalf of
BikeWalkLee