

Ontario Ministry of Transportation

# Evaluation of Ontario's Handheld Ban

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# Distracted Driving By the Numbers

## Risk

Odds of being in collision/ near-collision increase by:

- **~4 times** when dialing, locating or answering a cellphone
- **10 times** when texting or browsing on a smartphone

## Prevalence

In 2016, inattentive driving (including cellphone use) was the **fourth** largest contributing factor to motor vehicle fatalities in Ontario.

increased  
**117%**  
since 1997

## Demographics

Young drivers are over-represented in distracted driving collisions:

In 2016, **24%** of inattentive drivers in fatal collisions were 16-25, **yet...**

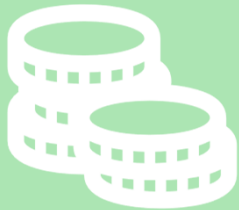
They represent only **15%** of the driver population.

# Ontario Legislation



## October 2009 Handheld ban:

Fine of \$155 for out-of-court settlements and \$500 for drivers challenging the ticket in court and found guilty.



## September 2015 Sanctions:

Fine range: \$300 – \$1,000

Novice drivers: licence suspension of 30 days (1<sup>st</sup> offence)  
90 days (2<sup>nd</sup> offence), licence cancellation (3<sup>rd</sup> offence).



## January 2019 Sanctions:

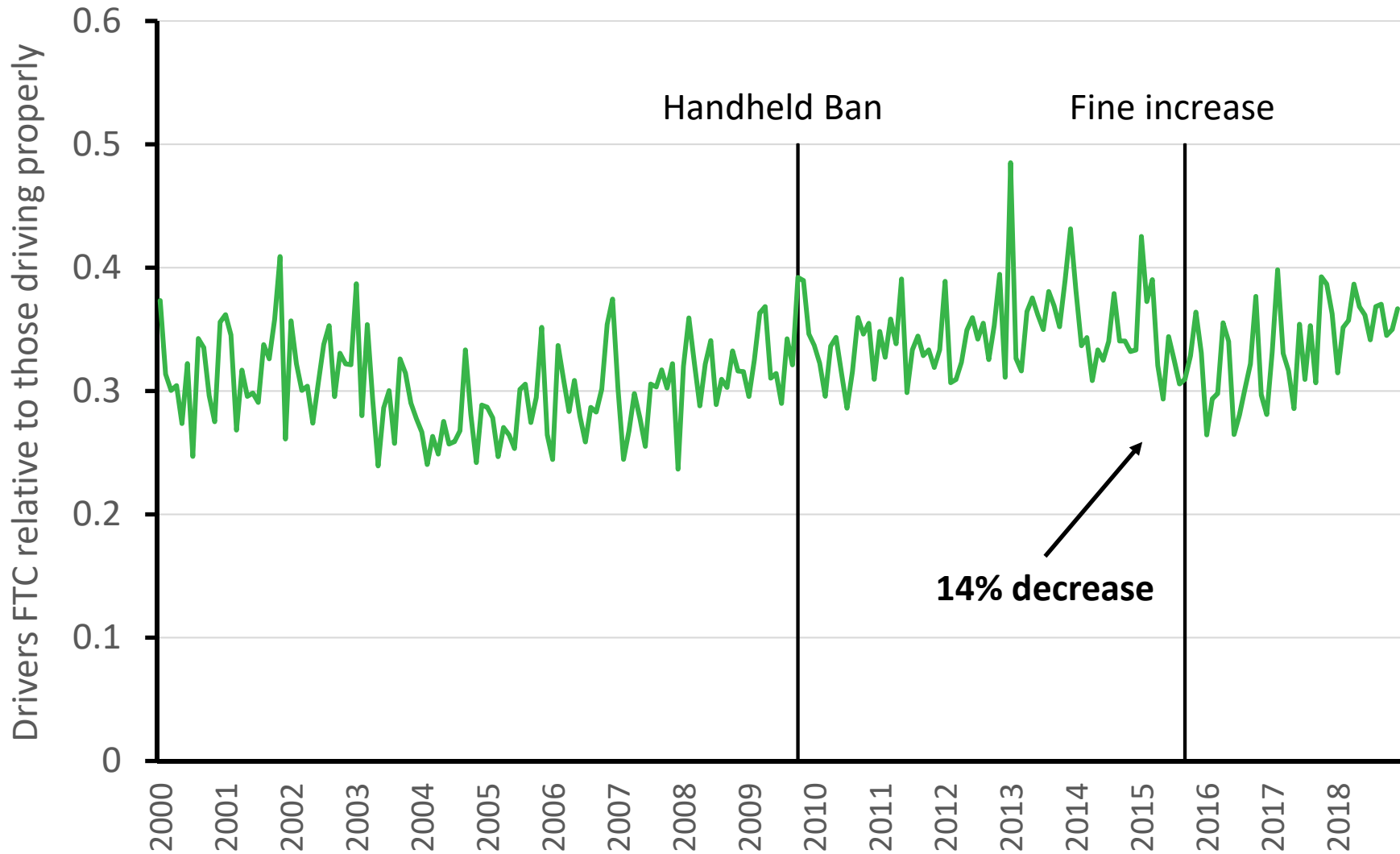
Fine range: \$500 – \$3,000

Licence suspensions for fully-licenced drivers: 3 – 30 days

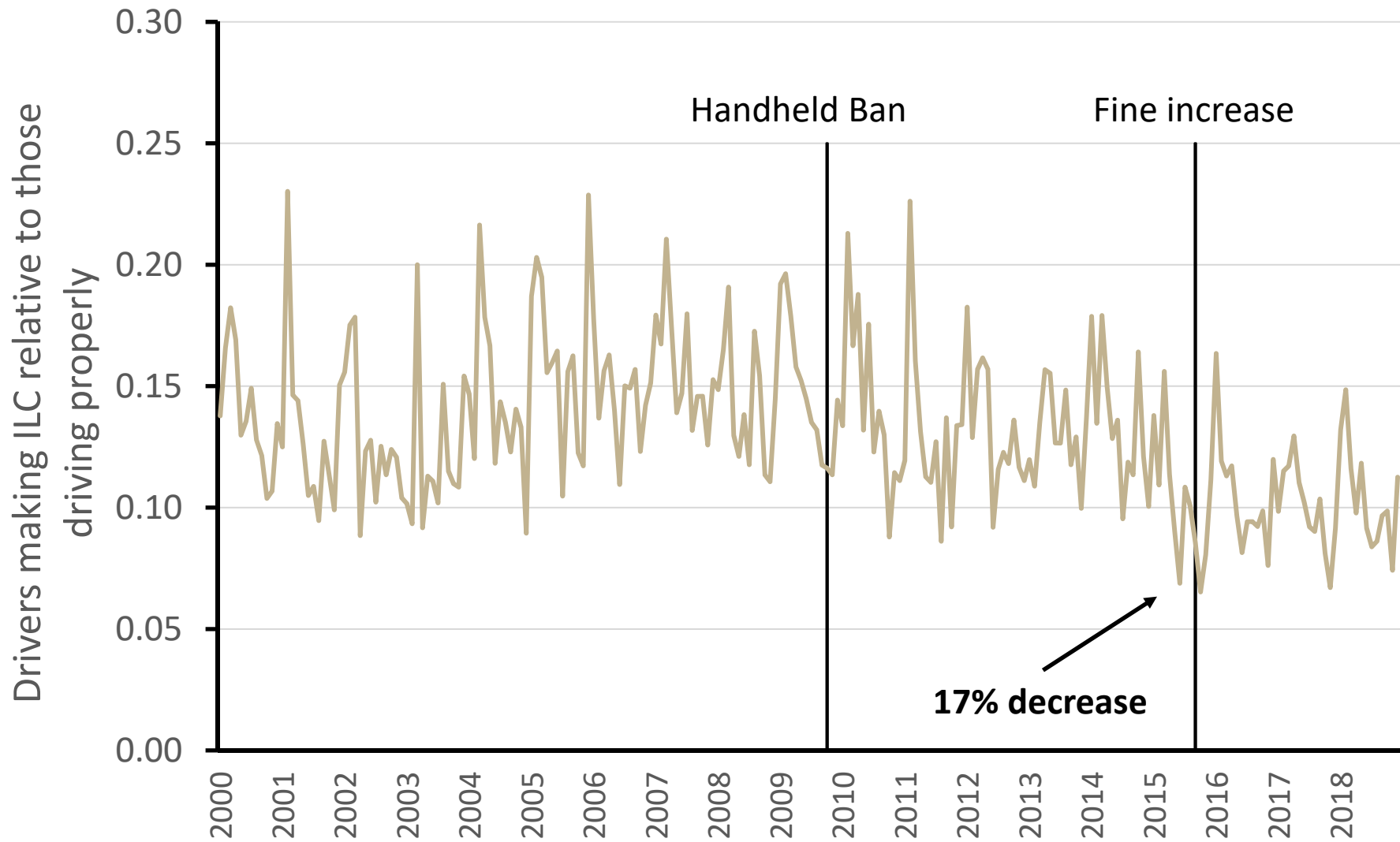
# Evaluation Methodology

<b>Cellphone related driving issues</b>	<p>Slowed or variable speeds (Beede &amp; Kass, 2006; Hunton &amp; Rose, 2005)</p> <p>Reduced reaction times (Strayer &amp; Johnston, 2001; Hunton &amp; Rose, 2005)</p> <p>Difficulty in lane-keeping (Beede &amp; Kass, 2006; Hosking et al., 2009)</p> <p>Decrease in visual field (Hosking, Young &amp; Regan, 2009)</p>
<b>Fatal/Injury Collision Proxy Measures</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. (# drivers “following too close”) / (# “driving properly”)</li><li>2. (# drivers making “improper lane changes”) / (# “driving properly”)</li><li>3. “Rear-end” collisions as a proportion of all collisions</li></ol>
<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>	<p>Any collisions involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• vehicles with a mechanical defect</li><li>• proximity to intersections or ramps</li><li>• adverse weather/road conditions</li><li>• drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs</li></ul>

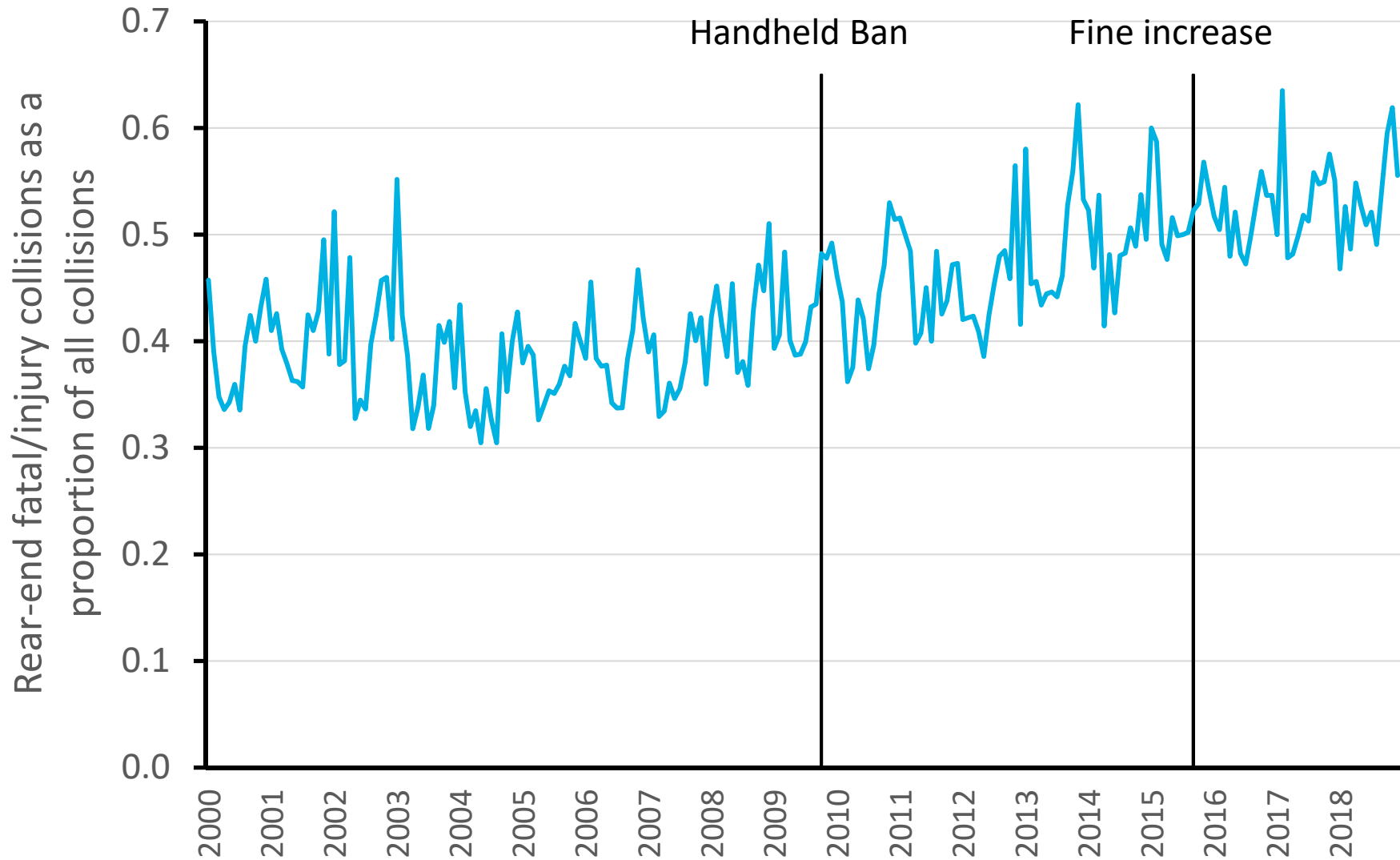
# 1. Following Too Close (FTC) proxy



## 2. Improper Lane Change (ILC) proxy



### 3. Rear-End proxy



# Preliminary Results & Next Steps

- 1) Increase in penalty severity in 2015 appears to have had beneficial effect on provincial highways
- 2) Effect of initial 2009 handheld ban less clear

## Next Steps:

- Conduct a similar analysis on municipal roads
- Examine trends in charging and conviction data
- Synthesize the results into recommendations
- Continue to work with road safety partners to develop policy, public education, and technological solutions to combat distracted driving







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