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IN HIGHWAY SAFETY

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Record Crowd Enjoys GHSA Annual Meeting

Dr. Runge Announces Safety Belt Accomplishment

GHSA's Annual Meeting was held August 24-27 in New Orleans. The event was the best-attended gathering in Association history—nearly 500 participants. The theme, “Risks, Remedies, and Reauthorization” meant that general sessions and workshops focused on the state of the highway safety effort, the solutions to current challenges and how these issues would be effected in the context of the looming reauthorization of state highway safety programs. Dr. Jeff Runge, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Mark Rosenker, Vice Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) served as keynote speakers.

Dr. Runge used his forum to make a dramatic announcement—

the nation had achieved record safety belt usage—79 percent. Dr. Runge said he “was completely blown away” by the achievement that exceeded the national goal of 78 percent. He thanked the state highway safety offices for their hard work and urged them to continue to work with NHTSA to continue the positive trend in belt usage.

Dr. Runge stressed that the Department of Transportation's top priority is reducing deaths on our roadways. He said that Secretary Mineta has issued a clear message throughout the department—that they will “do for homeland security.” Dr. Runge also stressed the importance of

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GHSA CHAIR KATHRYN SWANSON
OPENS THE ANNUAL MEETING

Legislative Outlook Looks Dim

October 1 was the deadline for Congress to enact a multi-year surface transportation reauthorization bill and an FY 2004 appropriations bill for the Department of Transportation. Instead, they passed a five-month extension of the current Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and a one-month Continuing Resolution.

Congress was slated to adjourn by October 3 but most Washington insiders believe they won't complete business until immediately prior to Thanksgiving. Speculation is that the Senate will vote on the FY 2004 appropriations bill in late October, the House and Senate will then go to conference on the bill, and it will then be wrapped into an omnibus spending bill that Congress enacts just prior to adjournment. Since Congress isn't likely to complete action on the remaining appropriations bills by the end of October, it is probable that a second Continuing Resolution will have to be enacted.

With respect to reauthorization, the emerging picture is an equally messy one. Levon Boyagian, majority staff director of the Highways, Transit and Pipelines Subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, recently spoke at a transportation luncheon and indicated that the Committee hopes to introduce

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the national goal of 1.0 fatalities per million vehicle miles traveled by 2008. He said he was pleased that GHSA had also adopted this ambitious goal.

NTSB Vice Chairman Rosenker explained the mission of his agency and emphasized that NTSB wants to be a resource for GHSA members. He said that even though the agency's main role in highway safety is to make recommendations, they want to focus more on encouraging implementation of those recommendations. He stressed the agency is committed to an advocacy role in states and they are more than willing to testify in support of safety legislation, "walk the halls" and provide "sweat equity" to pass legislation. Rosenker said NTSB would continue to be a bully pulpit for highway safety—"serving out safety sermons on a daily basis."

Throughout the remainder of the Annual Meeting, various sessions were held on the most pressing highway safety issues of the day. While business was the order of the day, many evening social opportunities allowed for networking and time to enjoy all the culture that New Orleans offers. GHSA's next annual meeting is September 26-29, 2004 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

NTSB VICE CHAIRMAN
 MARK ROSENKER SPEAKS
 AS DR. RUNGE AND
 KATHYRN SWANSON LISTEN.

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its multi-year reauthorization bill prior to Thanksgiving. It was unclear from his remarks whether the Committee hoped to go to markup by then. If the funding issues can be resolved, then the Committee hopes that the bill would go to the House floor sometime in February. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee—the lead committee on reauthorization in the Senate—hasn't publicly indicated what its schedule is but Washington insiders believe that it is likely to be similar to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's. That would leave little time to conference the House and Senate bills, particularly since Congress is out of session for much of January and February.

The main stumbling block to a multi-year reauthorization is funding. Both the House and Senate Committees have indicated that they want to increase funding from the current levels and above the levels proposed in the Administration's reauthorization

bill. A number of alternative approaches are being considered including but not limited to drawing down the balance in the Highway Trust Fund, indexing the Trust Fund, allowing bonding for new construction projects, and increasing the federal gasoline tax by 5 to 9 cents a gallon.

In order to fund a new multi-year bill at high enough levels, an increase in the gasoline tax may be needed. However, the Administration is opposed to such an increase and there is no clear support by the House and Senate leadership. In fact, a number of House Republicans actively oppose an increase in the federal gasoline tax. Until the funding issues can be resolved, it is unlikely that action will be taken on a multi-year reauthorization bill. It is more probable that Congress will enact another extension that will authorize federal surface transportation programs until after the November 2004 elections.

GHSA will report on the latest legislative update in November's "Washington Update" publication.





Senate Holds Hearings on Underage Drinking

On September 30, The Senate Subcommittee on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services held hearings on underage drinking. The hearings were convened in response to the release of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report that suggested comprehensive reforms to reduce underage drinking and the tragedies it causes.

Subcommittee Chairman Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH) opened the hearing saying, "We haven't done enough to acknowledge how prevalent and widespread teenage drinking is in this country. We haven't done enough to admit that it is a real problem with very real and very devastating consequences. We talk about drugs and the dangers of drug use, as we should, but the reality is that we, as a society, have become complacent about the problem of underage drinking." Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) also attended the hearing and

acknowledged that the NAS recommendations were far reaching and that "our responses must be equally far reaching." The Senator added, "While I believe that all of these suggestions have merit, I am most convinced that the effort to prevent underage drinking requires a greatly strengthened Federal commitment as government spending to prevent underage drinking pales in comparison to that devoted to drug and tobacco prevention efforts."

Panelists included NAS report authors Richard Bonnie and John Battle, Wendy Hamilton, National President of MADD, Jeff Becker, President of the Beer Institute, Idaho First Lady Patricia Kempthorne who testified on behalf of the Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free, and David DeAngelis, a high school student from Connecticut.

Hamilton and Kempthorne both testified that their organiza-

tion's strongly supported the NAS report and that they felt it presented a historic opportunity to make significant progress in reducing underage drinking. Becker cited the work of industry on the issue and cited reductions in drunk driving and teen drinking since the 1980's. He said the industry did have "many fundamental differences" with the NAS report on issues like taxation and advertising. David DeAngelis, the high school student described relaxed attitudes held among a number of his peers and their parents. He said, "Many parents not only condone the use of alcohol, but also provide liquor to their children and their children's friends."

More information about the NAS report can be found in the September issue of GHSA's "Washington Update." GHSA also submitted written testimony for the hearing which is posted online at www.ghsa.org.

New GHSA Officers Elected

GHSA's Membership has selected its leadership for 2003-2004. The term began at the recent Annual Meeting and will end at next year's gathering in Hawaii. Kathryn Swanson (Minnesota) was elected Chair, Colonel Jim Champagne (Louisiana) was elected Vice Chair, Fred Zwonechek (Nebraska) is the Treasurer and Lorrie Laing (Ohio) is the Secretary.

Swanson and Colonel Champagne have been serving in their positions since March of this year following a leadership change in the Association. Swanson is the director of Minnesota's Office of Traffic Safety in the state's Department of Public Safety. Since assuming the role of GHSA Chair earlier this year, Swanson

has testified before Congress, spoken at press conferences and represented the Association in a variety of forums and events.

She told the membership that her main goals in the next year are to guide the Association through the reauthorization of the state highway safety programs and to help the large number of new GHSA members adjust to their new positions.

Like Swanson, Colonel Champagne is no stranger to the highway safety community. He was appointed Governor's Highway Safety Representative and Executive Director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission in 1996. He hosted this year's Annual Meeting and

has represented the Association at numerous events including the recent announcement of new distracted driving research (see story on page 5).

Zwonechek will be serving his second consecutive term as Treasurer overseeing the Association's operations and financial matters. He has also helped craft the Association's policy regarding the Segway Human Transporters and represented the Association in numerous media interviews. Laing is new in her role as Secretary but has served on GHSA's Board representing Region V and also represents the Association on the National Child Passenger Safety Board.



Century Council Releases New Hardcore Drunk Driving State Sourcebook

The Century Council (TCC) announced the release of a new comprehensive Hardcore Drunk Driving State Sourcebook in early October. The new sourcebook includes recommendations to help educate law enforcement, judges, prosecutors and state legislatures about the problem of hardcore drunk driving as well as to highlight state specific information on hardcore provisions and regulations. Hardcore drunk drivers are those with blood alcohol content (BAC) levels in excess of .15 or are repeat offender. They are responsible for 58 percent of alcohol-related traffic fatalities.

TCC also released a national survey that reveals that 66 percent of federal and state opinion leaders believe that fighting hardcore drunk driving is a priority. Yet, when asked questions

regarding the average BAC of drunk drivers arrested for DWI, the number of fatally injured drivers who were repeat offenders, and the associated risk of a motor vehicle crash for drivers with a high BAC, many of the federal and state opinion leaders answered incorrectly.

TCC used the survey to urge Congress to include its recommendations to strengthen hardcore drunk driving provisions in the reauthorization of TEA-21. Susan Molinari, Chairman of TCC said, "It is disturbing that while those tasked to draft legislation to fight hardcore drunk driving recognize this issue as a priority, few Congressional staffers know the details of what defines this dangerous group," With reauthorization in our midst, there is no better time to shine the spotlight on these

dangerous offenders. Clearly, more work needs to be done to rid our nation's highways of the epidemic of hardcore drunk drivers."

According to Molinari, TCC was guided by law enforcement and traffic safety professionals in development of the Hardcore Drunk Driver State Sourcebook as a tool to fight the problem more effectively. The sourcebook is also intended to assist legislators, highway safety officials, law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, community activists and treatment professionals in developing programs to reduce and eliminate hardcore drunk driving.

Vince Burgess, Virginia's Assistant Commissioner for Highway Safety spoke of GHSA's support of the sourcebook saying, "This tool highlights key issues confronting us all in the effort to address hardcore drunk drivers. For example, every state must establish and implement statewide tracking and record keeping as a means to identify hardcore drunk drivers and ensure all jurisdictions within a state have accurate information concerning an offender's record if we are to win the battle against hardcore drunk drivers."

The report urges that there should be a coordinated system to fight hardcore DWI. Strategies should include those that allow swift identification, certain punishment and effective treatment.

The sourcebook can be accessed at www.dwidata.org.



Speakers at the TCC event included: Ellen Engleman, Vince Burgess, Thomas McGuire, Doug Gansler, Tom Langhorne, and Susan Molinari.



AAA Study Finds Top Major Driver Distractions

On August 6, GHSA joined the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety in announcing the distracted driving research, "Distractions in Everyday Driving." During the event, AAA released a new survey that examined distracted driving content in state driver's license manuals and unveiled measures to help both new and current drivers. Speakers at the press conference were: Peter Kissinger, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety President and CEO; Robert L. Darbelnet, AAA President and CEO; Jane Stutts, Ph.D., University of North Carolina; and Colonel Jim Champagne, Vice Chair, GHSA.

The "Distractions in Everyday Driving" report was produced by Dr. Jane Stutts at the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center. It was the second phase of a research project on driver distractions. The report looked at the exposure side of distracted driving—namely, what kinds of distracting activities

motorists commonly engage in while behind the wheel. The study showed that distractions are common in everyday driving. All 70 subjects manipulated vehicle controls including the radio, and nearly all reached for objects in the vehicle or were distracted by events outside the vehicle. The study also found that infants were about eight times more likely to cause distraction than adult passengers. Overall, drivers were engaged in some form of potentially distracting activity 16.1 percent of the total time their vehicles were moving. The study included volunteers from ages 18 to 80 years of age and found that no group was immune to driving distractions, yet drivers over the age of 60 were less likely to engage in these distracted activities.

Colonel Champagne spoke of GHSA's support for the new research and need for more studies on the issue. He discussed the

Association's position that all distractions are dangerous and that states should enact policies that broadly address this rather than singling out one distraction such as the cell phone. Champagne also endorsed the model language on distracted driving for state driver's license manuals and said that he hoped states would adopt it or something similar.

The event concluded with a viewing of the new nationwide television public service announcement on distracted driving.

Peter Kissinger added, "No law or regulation will make drivers keep their eyes on the roads. But I encourage drivers to pick the appropriate time and place to choose to engage in these distracted activities."

For more information on "Distractions in Everyday Driving," visit www.aaafoundation.org.



COLONEL JIM CHAMPAGNE

GHSA Vice Chair Honored by MADD

GHSA Vice Chair and Louisiana Highway Safety Commission Executive Director Jim Champagne has been awarded the National Mothers Against Drunk Driving inaugural Highway Safety Partners Award. The award was given to Champagne at MADD's recent national conference in New Orleans for working with the organization on "mutual goals...such as stopping drunk driving, supporting the victims of this violent crime and preventing underage drinking."

Congratulations, Jim!



NHTSA Survey Details Attitudes Toward Drinking and Driving

NHTSA has released the first volume summary report of a national survey of society's attitudes surrounding drinking and driving. Key finding of the *2001 National Survey of Drunk Driving* are:

- Nearly 22 percent of the driving age public has driven a motor vehicle within two hours of consuming alcoholic beverages.
- Males are more than twice as likely to have driven within two hours of drinking than females.
- Adults 21 to 29 years old are the most likely to be drinking drivers, with 37 percent of males and 20 percent of females driving within two hours of consumption.
- On average, drinking drivers consume 2.6 drinks within the two hours prior to driving.
- Drivers make 77 percent of drinking-driving trips with blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels below 0.05 percent.
- Approximately 11 percent of trips are made by a driver with a BAC of 0.08 or higher.
- About 1 percent report being arrested for impaired driving within the past two years. Males under age 30 were most likely to have been arrested.
- The driving age public generally feels an impaired driver is more likely to have a crash than be stopped by police.

The majority of those surveyed by NHTSA believe the most effective strategies to reduce impaired driving are providing alternate transportation and making bars and liquor stores suffer more serious consequences for selling to minors and to customers who are already drunk. Survey respondents also supported other strategies: increasing law enforcement (49 percent), making alcohol treatment more available (41 percent), limiting alcohol advertising (36 percent), making alcohol more difficult to purchase by limiting sales outlets (28 percent), and increasing alcohol's cost (20 percent).

The full NHTSA survey is available online at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

Share a Story or Opinion

Would you like to share a success story or your opinion with the readers of *Directions in Highway Safety*? Articles can be submitted to:
 Editor
Directions in Highway Safety
 750 First Street, NE, Suite 720,
 Washington, DC 20002.
 email: (headquarters@statehighwaysafety.org)

Work Zone-Related Fatalities Increase

Roadway work-zone fatalities have risen 70 percent since 1997, according to NHTSA. In 2002, 1,181 people died in roadway construction zones—an increase of 102 from 2001. Texas had the most work zone fatalities in 2002 (192), followed by California (119), Georgia (118), Florida (87), New York (60), North Carolina (47), Arkansas (40), Tennessee (38), Pennsylvania (33) and Alabama (33). Five states reported that they only had a single roadway work zone fatality. These states are: Alaska, Connecticut, North Dakota, Rhode Island and Utah.

To reduce the danger to both motorists and highway workers in the nation's roadway construction zones, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association recommends drivers:

- Stay alert and concentrate full attention on the roadway;
- Pay close attention to both work zone signs and flaggers;
- Do not tailgate;
- Note posted speed limits in and around work zones and do not speed;
- Minimize distractions such as radios, eating and cell phones;
- Practice Patience

For a state-by-state breakdown of work-zone related fatalities and fatal crashes, visit www.wzsafety.tamu.edu



Louisiana is First State to Copyright Driver's License

Louisiana has become the first state in the nation to charge anyone who forges a state driver's license or state ID card with violating a copyright in addition to committing forgery and other charges. Several state agencies have a registered copyright on the sketch of the state Capitol which is used as the backdrop for information printed on each license/ID card.

Karen Sanders, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission said the move was aimed mainly at people who provide fake IDs from outside Louisiana or even outside the United States or who reach customers via the Internet. The Associated Press quoted Sanders as saying, "This will give them (law enforcement) the instrument they need to go beyond Louisiana borders to people who are creating fake identifications."

Louisiana's Office of Motor Vehicles, the State Police, the Office of Alcoholic Beverage Control and the Highway Safety Commission and the Attorney General's Office hold the copyright. The penalty for a violation is a \$150,000 fine unless the state can prove that it lost more money than that because of the violation.

New Jersey Drowsy Driving Law Takes Effect

New Jersey has become the first state in the nation to enact a law making drowsy driving illegal. Prosecutors will be able to charge a driver who has been in a deadly crash with motor vehicular homicide if that crash is caused by the driver's lack of sleep. The penalty for these guilty New Jersey motorists can be up to 10 years in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

The law is known as "Maggie's Law," named for 20-year-old college student Maggie McDonnell who was killed in 1997 by a van driver who admitted having been awake for 30 hours. The driver whose van struck McDonnell was tried twice in New Jersey. The first jury deadlocked. During the second trial, defense lawyers argued that no state law existed forbidding falling asleep at the wheel, and that the motorist had done nothing wrong. The judge had refused to allow jurors to consider the issue of sleep deprivation.

Recent studies estimate 51 percent of motorists feel drowsy behind the wheel, and about two of every 10 drivers say they have fallen asleep while driving in the past year. NHTSA estimates that

fatigued drivers cause at least 100,000 crashes and 1,535 fatalities a year.

The new law has been well received by the National Sleep Foundation, a nonprofit research organization that promotes healthy sleep habits. Darrel Drobnich, Senior Director of Government Affairs for the Foundation told the *LA Times*, "Maggie's Law is a very important step forward. It is the first law that specifically deals with the issue of drowsy driving and makes it a prosecutable offense. We hope it will spur educational initiatives."

Drobnich also said that many states currently prosecute fatigued motorists who cause crashes by charging them with such violations as reckless driving, leaving the scene of an crash, failure to maintain control of a vehicle or manslaughter. New York state is also considering legislation similar to the New Jersey law.

New Jersey's Governor's Highway Safety Representative will share his views on his state's new drowsy driving law in the next edition of "Directions."



CAMY Releases Two New Studies on Youth Exposure to Alcohol Ads

CAMY has released two new studies on Youth Exposure to Alcohol Ads. One study focused on the overexposure of alcohol ads by underage African American youth and the second focused on parents concerns with underage drinking and alcohol company's advertisements.

The first study found that alcohol companies consistently overexposed underage African American youth to more alcohol ads than non-African American youth in magazines, on television, and on the radio in 2002. CAMY's study is the first systematic review of alcohol advertising directed to the nation's second-largest minority group.

In magazines, CAMY found high percentages of underage African American youth exposed to alcohol advertising. That group saw 66 percent more beer and ale advertising and 81 percent more distilled spirits advertising in magazines in 2002, and 45 percent more advertising for malt beverages, alcopops and other "low-alcohol refreshers." These high percentages account for 96 percent of African American youth viewing 171 alcohol ads compared to an average of 111 ads for non-African American youth.

The Center also found that television advertisements for alcohol catered to underage African American youth. Alcohol companies in 2002 placed advertisements on 15 television shows that are popular amongst African American youth. These television shows included *Bernie Mac*, *King of the Hill*, and *My Wife and Kids*.

Advertisements for alcoholic beverages on the radio were also heard in greater proportions by this demographic. They heard 12 percent more beer advertising and 56 percent more ads for distilled spirits than non-African American youth. One reason for the disparity is that Urban Contemporary and Rhythmic Contemporary Hit radio stations accounted for 70 percent of the alcohol advertising, stations popular with African American youth.

"This report clearly shows that African American youth are being overexposed to alcohol advertising," said David Jernigan, research director for CAMY. "In previous reports, we found significant overexposure of all youth compared to legal-age adults to alcohol advertising in magazines and on television and radio. This new report gives parents of

African American youth cause for concern."

CAMY's second study also addressed the overexposure of underage drinkers to alcohol advertisements. The study found that two-thirds of parents surveyed say that seeing and hearing alcohol ads make teens more likely to drink alcohol, and almost three-quarters of parents say that alcohol companies are not doing enough to limit the exposure of alcohol advertising to teens.

"The survey results are striking because they show a nearly universal view among parents that alcohol companies should be doing more to reduce teens' exposure," said Geoffrey Garin of Peter D. Hart Research Associates.

The survey also found that a large gap exists between parents' perceptions of their teens' drinking habits and those habits reported by teens themselves. In the 15-to 16-year olds group, thirty-one percent of parents of teens indicated their teen probably or definitely consumed an alcoholic beverage in the last year, compared to sixty percent of teens in this age group who reported having done so. Another key finding was that over eighty percent of parents surveyed believe that the alcohol industry has a responsibility to avoid exposing underage drinkers to messages encouraging alcohol consumption. "Parents want accountability and responsibility from the beer and liquor companies," said Jim O'Hara, Executive Director of CAMY.

For more information on these two reports, visit www.camy.org. For information on previous CAMY reports please see previous articles in the March and June editions of Directions.



Safety Belts Are a Necessity for Pregnant Women

A recent study released by the University of Utah and the Center for Injury Research and Control at the University of Pittsburgh found that many women choose not to wear a safety belt while riding in a car. The researchers found that pregnant women forget to wear their seat belts, complained of discomfort, or worried that safety belts might injure the fetus or themselves.

According to medical professionals, proper use of a safety belt is very important to pregnant women and their unborn baby. The journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology reports that after a car crash, unbelted women are nearly three times more likely to lose their fetus and twice as likely to have excessive maternal bleeding as expectant mothers wearing seat belts.

According to the study, of the 322,704 live births in Utah from 1992 to 1999, 8,938 cases were involved in a crash during pregnancy. Of the 2,645 fetal deaths that occurred in Utah during that period, only 45 were linked to a motor vehicle crash. Yet the researcher's concluded that unbelted pregnant women were 2.8 times more likely to experience a fetal death compared to belted pregnant women in crashes.

The study also found that 51 percent of fetal deaths were linked to crashes that occurred during the first trimester.

The correct usage and positioning of seat belts is important for both pregnant women and their fetus. The study says lap belts should be placed snugly under the abdomen and shoulder belts positioned diagonally across the chest. These suggestions reaffirm those made by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Medical Association.

For more information on the Center for Injury Research and Control at the University of Pittsburgh, visit www.circl.pitt.edu/home.

NHTSA/BET Partnership Pays Off as African American Seat Belt Use Surges

NHTSA and Black Entertainment Television's (BET) two-year partnership to promote seat belt awareness and usage in the African American Community has translated in significantly more members of this community buckling up. NHTSA's 2003 seat belt survey shows that African Americans are buckling up 77 percent of the time, an eight-percentage increase since 2000. NHTSA attributes this increase, at least in part, to their joint effort with BET known as the "Strap it On Campaign."

The campaign was the first of its kind with widespread national reach, incorporating a

full multi-media safety campaign for African American teens. It came in response to the evidence that the leading cause of death for African American children through the age of 14 and the second-leading cause of death of young black adults 15-24 was motor vehicle crashes.

In April 2002, BET's Teen Summit featured public service announcements promoting safe driving habits during the spring and summer graduation period when proms and parties were taking place—a high-risk time for traffic crashes involving teens. Later that year, Strap it On was featured in a segment on safety belt awareness and usage that reached approximately 5 million teens across the nation. The outreach and program activities of Strap it On also included public promotions reaching more than 75,000 people through billboard advertising at the football pre-game events of historically black college and universities in 2001-02.

To further promote the reach of Strap it On, BET took the message online with the www.BET.com website, the top Internet portal for African Americans. With the added reach of BET.com's audience of millions of teens, young adults between 15-25 and other Internet surfers, BET took the safety belt message to a new level. This effort led to an additional 5,000 visitors who visited the NHTSA website and learned about the issue.



Red Light Running Prevention Should Be a Top Traffic Safety Priority

By Leslie Blakey, Executive Director
National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running

Last year, red light runners caused as many as 207,000 crashes resulting in 921 deaths and 178,000 injuries. The public cost of these preventable tragedies exceeds \$14 billion. The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running works with traffic safety groups across the country to reduce the incidence of red light running crashes in the United States and the fatalities and injuries it causes.

Aggressive driving and inattention are the main causes of red light running. People must understand that there are consequences for this irresponsible behavior and that a “my time is more valuable than your safety” mentality is unacceptable.

One of the reasons red light running is such a pervasive problem is because drivers do not believe they will be caught. In order to reduce red light running as well as excessive speeding, the perception of risk must change. Consistent enforcement is key to accomplishing this goal. One of the most effective ways to reduce red light running and speeding is to implement photo enforcement programs.

In June, *The Lancet* published research that shows more enforcement will save lives, injuries and

crashes. According to the study, one life would be saved for every 80,000 tickets issued, one emergency room visit would be prevented for every 1,300 tickets issued, and \$1,000 in societal costs would be saved for every 13 tickets issued.

Over the past decade, photo enforcement has matured into a successful traffic safety strategy that is in use in more than 70 communities in the United States. Numerous studies have shown that photo enforcement leads to a 25 to 30 percent reduction in injury crashes at intersections. In Washington, D.C., red light running fatalities were reduced 80 percent in the first two years of red light camera use.

While cameras are clearly not a replacement for police officers, an automated enforcement program is one effective component of a broad-based traffic safety program that includes engineering, education and manned enforcement.

One thing is certain. In order to stop red light running, we need strong leadership at the national, state and local levels to focus attention and resources on this important issue. The Governors Highway Safety Association has been a valuable partner in red

light running prevention. GHSA serves on the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running’s board of advisors and has been a strong advocate for intersection safety.

GHSA members play an important leadership role in the effort to stop red light running. By placing priority status on red light running prevention, governors’ representatives provide life-saving leadership at the state level and in turn foster local efforts. We encourage you to make red light running prevention one of your traffic safety priorities.

Red light running prevention initiatives can involve any or all of the following activities:

- Include discussion of the issue and effective solutions at conferences and meetings across your state.
- Include funding for red light running prevention groups in your safety budgets.
- Maximize opportunities to highlight red light running prevention such as National Stop on Red Week August 28-September 3, 2004.
- Establish a statewide task force on red light running to examine your state’s problem and identify effective solutions.
- Encourage the public to join the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running.
- Forward the Campaign’s “Safety Focus” newsletter to others who may be interested.

We urge you to contact us at 202-828-9100 or take a look at our website at www.stoppedlightrunning.com to find out more about how you can focus on red light running prevention and better inform your community to stop on red.



November 13-14	“Symposium on High-Visibility Enforcement: “Building Sustained Safety Belt Use” Raleigh, North Carolina (By Invitation Only)
17-30	National “Click it or Ticket” Mobilization, www.nhtsa.dot.gov
December 3-4	AASHTO Lead State Meeting for States Implementing AASHTO Strategic Safety Plan Washington, DC (By Invitation Only)
December 4	National Commission Against Drunk Driving National Awards Luncheon Washington, DC Contact: 240-247-6004, www.ncadd.com
8-12	Roadway Safety Executive Seminar Miami, Florida Contact: American Road & Transportation Builders Associations, 202-289-4434

GHSA Welcomes New Associate Members

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Marilyn Kali

Corporate Member
ACS State and Local Solutions, Inc.
Knupp & Watson, Inc.
State Farm Insurance Companies
Nationwide Insurance

Nonprofit Members
Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign
The BACCHUS and GAMMA Peer Education Network

*To apply for Associate Membership in GHSA,
visit or call 202-789-0942*

New Report Shows How Aging Population will Factor into Transportation Funding

The Brookings Institution released a report last month that alerts federal legislators to the growing needs of an aging population as lawmakers look at future surface transportation funding for the next six years and beyond.

Sandra Rosenbloom, author of the Brookings report, concluded, “The reauthorization of the federal transportation law, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, presents an excellent opportunity for Congress to respond directly to diverse mobility needs of the elderly.” The report notes: “In 2000, 35 million Americans, or 12.4 percent of the total population were over the age of 65, and almost 4.5 million or 1.6 percent of the total population were over age 85. Almost all of those seniors will have been licensed drivers for most of their lives, including many seniors too disabled to walk very far or use conventional public transportation. Seniors in the future will be even more dependent on the car than today’s elderly.”

Rosenbloom urged Congress to use federal funds to encourage communities to update all aspects of the road system in accordance with Federal Highway Administration’s Older Driver Design Guidelines. She urged that states should be allowed to use their state and federal funds to assist older drivers to continue driving, particularly those with financial difficulties. Rosenbloom also recommended that the federal government work in partnership with private industry to take a more active role in designing safer cars.

The complete report may be viewed online at www.brook.edu.

New Research Details Actions Leading to Fatal Truck-Car Crashes

A recent report by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) on the causes of car-truck fatal crashes concludes that the car driver is primarily responsible 75 percent of the time while the truck driver is responsible only 25 percent of the time.

Using data from NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting (FARS) system, researchers identified a total of 94 unsafe driving actions or driver conditions that can contribute to a crash.

Interestingly, UMTRI found that of the 94 factors, five are linked to 65 percent of the unsafe actions by car drivers that led to fatal car-truck, and fatal car-car crashes.

These are: failure to keep in

lane or running off the road (21 percent); failure to yield right of way (16 percent); driving above the speed limit or too fast for roadway conditions (12 percent); failure to obey signage or signals (9 percent); and not paying attention (9 percent). These same five unsafe actions were also prevalent among truck drivers, accounting for 51 percent of their unsafe actions.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) sponsored the study, and the organization will soon launch a national campaign to inform drivers of ways to reduce car-truck crashes. The study concluded that this type of educational campaign along with training could alert drivers of the primary actions that cause fatal

car-truck crashes. AAAFTS will make the study's five basic recommendations for driving in the proximity of trucks as the centerpiece of their educational campaign. These recommendations are:

- Never change lanes abruptly around trucks;
- Slow down and give trucks the right of way;
- Comply with posted speed limits and drive at safe speeds for conditions;
- Always use turn signals when changing lanes;
- Minimize driving next to and close behind trucks.

The complete study is available on the AAAFTS website at www.aaafoundation.org.

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