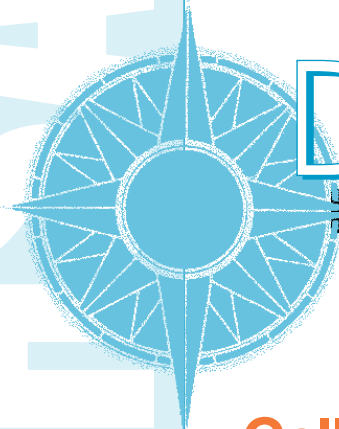


# DIRECTIONS

A Publication of the GOVERNORS HIGHWAY SAFETY ASSOCIATION

## IN HIGHWAY SAFETY

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## Cell Phone Use and Driving Earns Attention

Cell phone use while driving continues to be a major area of interest for legislators, safety groups and the national media. A new report from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) and a new policy position from the National Safety Council (NSC) generated recent buzz on the issue.

In December, AAAFTS released a survey reporting that two-thirds of Americans who use cell phones while driving believe it is safer to talk on a hands-free phone compared to a hand-held device. However, scientific research shows that is not the case. Multiple studies have concluded that any cell phone use while driving is distracting and hands-free offers little to no safety benefit.

In early January, the NSC attracted national and international attention when it announced its new position that every state should ban ALL cell phone use while driving. NSC is the first major national safety organization to take this position.

“Studies show that driving while talking on a cell phone is extremely dangerous and puts drivers at a four times greater risk of a crash,” said Janet Froetscher, president and CEO of the NSC. “Driving drunk is also dangerous and against the law. When our friends have been drinking, we take the car keys away. It’s time to take the cell phone away.”

### Cell Phones and Driving

#### Research

[www.aafts.org](http://www.aafts.org); [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org)

#### National Safety Council Policy

[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)

#### Current State Laws, GHSA Policy

[www.ghsa.org](http://www.ghsa.org)

To promote its policy, the NSC plans an aggressive three-fold approach: advocating legislation; educating the public and businesses; and including distracted driving in its training of 1.5 million people annually in its defensive driver training courses.

The increased focus on the dangers of cell phone use and driving is welcomed by GHSA. GHSA Chairman Vernon Betkey indicated the organization would work with AAAFTS, NSC and other safety groups to educate the public about the dangers of distracted driving. However, GHSA does not support broad cell phone bans given the difficulty in enforcing them.

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## 2007 Traffic Safety Fact Sheets

NHTSA has published new 2007 Traffic Safety Facts Sheets. These fact sheets contain the 2007 FARS Alcohol-Related Fatalities and 2006 Final FARS data. Other fact sheets will be available in the near future. The facts sheets available at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nscsa](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nscsa) include:

- Overview Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Alcohol-Impaired Driving Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Bicyclists and Other Cyclists
- Children Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Large Trucks Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Motorcycles Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Occupant Protection Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Older Population Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Pedestrians Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- School Transportation-Related Crashes Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- Speeding Traffic Safety Fact Sheet
- State Alcohol-Impaired Driving Estimates
- Young Drivers Traffic Safety Fact Sheet



## Former Congressman Ray LaHood Confirmed as DOT Secretary

President Barack Obama has chosen former Illinois Congressman Ray LaHood to serve as his Transportation Secretary. LaHood, one of two Republican members of President Barack Obama's Cabinet, is recognized around Washington for his practical, non-partisan approach.

The new Secretary will take lead responsibility on the transportation programs in the economic stimulus package the Obama Administration hopes to enact as well as in the highway reauthorization. LaHood served on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee during the 1990s, and then on the House Appropriations Committee.

In his confirmation hearing, LaHood said safety would be one of his four areas of focus. The others are the economy, sustainability and a focus on people and communities.

House Transportation Committee chairman James Oberstar (D-MN), who will also have an influential role in any future transportation legislation, commended LaHood's "temperament" and "managerial expertise." Referring to his tenure on the Transportation Committee, Oberstar said LaHood "was a team player all the way through."

GHSA Chairman Vernon F. Betkey, Jr. praised the LaHood choice and indicated that this pragmatic, non-political approach was the best way to address the difficult challenges expected in the highway reauthorization.

LaHood served in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1982 to 1994 and represented Illinois' 18th district, which includes Peoria, from 1994 through 2008. He did not seek re-election in 2008.

## GHSA is Going Green!

As part of GHSA's ongoing commitment to protect the environment and best use its limited resources, the Association continues to move as much of our materials as possible to "online only." The Association's *Washington Update* publication is online and available to members only. GHSA news releases are also posted online and sent via e-mail.

The current version of the GHSA Policies publication is online-only and the same will hold for the upcoming State Profiles publication. We also continue utilizing the Internet in our Annual Meeting and Annual Awards Process.

We are considering moving *Directions in Highway Safety* to online-only. Before doing this, we'd like to hear what our readers think. Please send any comments to [jadkins@ghsa.org](mailto:jadkins@ghsa.org). Your feedback will help us balance environmental and cost concerns with the desire to keep our publication easily accessible.

If you don't currently receive GHSA news releases and other electronic updates, please sign-up for our e-mail distribution list. Visit [www.ghsa.org](http://www.ghsa.org) and click on the icon to register.



## Roadway Safety Foundation Announces Technical Assistance Winners

The Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) has announced the six winners of “Safer Roads: Building Safety into Your Drive” public information and education campaign.

The following organizations will receive technical assistance ranging from \$15,000 to \$75,000 to undertake public information and education campaigns to raise awareness of the safety benefits and the need for infrastructure and engineering roadway safety improvements:

- South Carolina Department of Transportation for a campaign to educate the public about the safety benefits of paved shoulders and rumble strips;
- University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration and the Delaware Center for Transportation for a campaign to educate local officials and the public about the importance of roadway modifications to make roads safer for older drivers;
- Michigan Department of Transportation to draw attention to the benefits of installing cable barriers along freeway medians;
- Utah Department of Transportation for a campaign to map a rural road network for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety’s usRAP (Road Assessment Program), which will work dually as a public resource and roadway improvement guide;
- Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) of the Michigan Technological University for a campaign to educate Native Americans about the importance of road safety features;
- Cook County (MN) Highway Department for a campaign to highlight the importance of roadway safety interventions.

The campaign is funded through a grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and was developed to raise awareness of the safety benefits and the need for infrastructure and engineering roadway safety improvements. Panel judges included representatives of RSF, FHWA, AARP and AAA. GHSA staff served on the campaign’s communications committee.



**SAFER ROADS:**  
Building Safety into Your Drive

## NTSB Releases 2009 “Most Wanted” Transportation Safety Improvements

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) held a press conference on November 25 to announce its annual “most wanted” list of transportation safety improvements directed at state governments. NTSB Members discussed the status of state laws addressing:

- booster seats for children up to age 8;
- primary enforcement of seat belt use;
- eliminating distractions for young drivers through graduated licensing;
- eliminating hard core drinking drivers; and
- recreational boating issues.

NTSB called on states currently lacking specific safety measures to enact these laws to prevent many fatalities and injuries from occurring on America’s roadways. The Agency urged states to prohibit novice drivers from using wireless communication devices and traveling with other young passengers. Recommendations dealing with hard core drinking included: frequent sobriety checkpoints; zero BAC for repeat offenders; administrative license revocation; vehicle sanctions; elimination of plea bargaining; records retention of at least 10 years; and more DWI courts or similar programs.

*Maps and tables providing state-by-state details for each of the recommendations can be found on the Board’s website [http://ntsb.gov/Recs/mostwanted/state\\_issues.htm](http://ntsb.gov/Recs/mostwanted/state_issues.htm).*

## Emergency Nurses Association Reviews State Highway Safety Laws

The Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) released a report examining which states have or are lacking in a variety of lifesaving highway safety laws. ENA hopes their *2008 National Scorecard on State Roadway Laws: A Blueprint for Injury Prevention* will motivate policy-makers, opinion-leaders and the general public to take a more active role in advocating for effective vehicle safety programs.

The scorecard assesses all states and the District of Columbia based on whether they have laws that fit specific criteria, including primary enforcement belt laws, booster seat laws, GDL laws, motorcycle helmet laws and ignition interlock laws. ENA also looked at whether a state had given the proper officials the authority to develop, maintain and evaluate a state trauma system.

ENA Past President Donna Mason announced the release of the report at a news conference in Washington DC. Joined by NTSB Member Debbie Hersman and Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety Vice President Jackie Gillan, Mason reported that only two states—Oregon and Washington—received the best possible scores on the ENA report. Both states met all 13 criteria.

The report commends states that have enacted new safety laws since ENA's first scorecard in 2006 and encourages groups to continue to push for enactment of more lifesaving laws.

*The full report is available on the ENA website at [www.ena.org](http://www.ena.org).*



## Maryland Creates Unique Highway Safety Partnership

A team of concerned business and civic leaders in Maryland recently formed the Maryland Highway Safety Foundation (MHSF), whose mission is to educate motorists, prevent collisions and save lives.

The MHSF was unveiled at a press conference in Annapolis, in a room filled with 615 pairs of shoes, representing the 615 people killed on Maryland's roads in 2007. Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, Administrator of the State Highway Administration Neil Pederson, GHSA Chairman Vernon Betkey and various other civic and business leaders were present at the event.

The Foundation will partner with the Maryland business community to encourage employers to implement programs and initiatives in the workplace to help

keep their staff and all Maryland highway users safe. Specifically, the Foundation announced a call-to-action for 100 Maryland businesses, representing at least 100,000 employees, to pledge changes within their organizations that will reduce highway deaths in Maryland by 100 over the next three years.

"There is no greater or more sacred responsibility we have in State government than to protect and preserve the safety of our citizens," said Governor O'Malley. "The Maryland Highway Safety Foundation is a unique collaborative effort among our partners in the private-sector, demonstrating that it is the responsibility of all Maryland citizens to keep the roads of our State safe."

*To learn more, visit [www.mdhwysafety.org](http://www.mdhwysafety.org).*



From left to right: Governor Martin O'Malley; Liza Lemaster, Maryland Highway Safety Office Impaired Driving Coordinator; and Vernon Betkey, Chief, Maryland Highway Safety Office and Chairman of the Governors Highway Safety Association. The Governor was the keynote speaker at the MHSF meeting and talked about Maryland's commitment to reduce motor vehicle crashes, deaths, and associated injuries.



## Missouri Law on Reporting Unfit Drivers Serves as Model for Other States

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (AAAFTS) recently completed a project to examine Missouri's voluntary reporting law for unsafe drivers. The law provides a process for citizens to report potentially unsafe drivers for retesting or possible license revocation and provides immunity protection for those reporting. The evaluators concluded that the law is working well and should be a model for other states to adopt.

The Missouri law emphasizes that licensing decisions are based on a person's functional performance and medical fitness, rather than chronological age. However, the average age of reported drivers was 80 years old. Under the law, the identity of the reporter is kept confidential. The law also protects physicians and other professionals against breach of patient confidentiality claims.

Researchers found that most reported drivers voluntarily gave up their licenses. At the completion of the study, only 144 of the 4,100

reported drivers retained their valid licenses. While the law has been found to be effective, researchers note that it is under-utilized (primarily used by police officers or license staff), and they encourage further public education so more physicians, family members and other stakeholders are aware of it.

The findings reinforce AAAFTS's national license policy recommendations set earlier this year, including: increased educational efforts, promotion of civil immunity, amplified role of license office staff, the establishment of Medical Advisory Boards (MABs), and the promotion of additional mobility options for unlicensed drivers.

*A copy of the full report is available online at [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org).*



*continued from page 1* **Cell Phone Use and Driving Garners Attention**

GHSA advocates bans in limited instances—for novice drivers and school bus drivers. The Association continues to call on employers to institute policies banning the practice for employees on the job. Chairman Betkey also points to technology as a potential remedy. Aegis Mobility, for example, offers DriveAssist, a product that can prevent non-emergency cell phone use while driving.

In 2008, 30 states considered hand-held bans, while numerous other states successfully banned the practice for novice drivers and bus drivers. With the increased attention, 2009 promises to be an even busier year legislatively.

## NHTSA Offers New Technical Assistance for Law Enforcement

NHTSA's Safety Countermeasures Division has announced two new products to help law enforcement improve road safety.

The first is a roll call video entitled *Enforcing Laws for Pedestrian Safety*. This video provides an introduction to some of the most common violations by both pedestrians and motorists that contribute to pedestrian crashes. It covers high-risk crash groups, crash types and locations. The video also includes information on the Safe Routes to School program that can be applied to pedestrian enforcement efforts.

Another new offering is a law enforcement course to address the needs of older drivers. As America's population ages, it is becoming more important for law enforcement officers develop the skills they need to effectively deal with people with age-related impairments. NHTSA and Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) have developed this Older Driver Law Enforcement Course to teach methods to identify and effectively deal with older driver issues.

*The pedestrian safety video can be obtained through NHTSA's Pedestrian Programs at 202-366-1739 or online at [mms://trinilearn.wmod.llnwd.net/a607/o1/NHTSA/PedestrianSafety.wmv](http://mms://trinilearn.wmod.llnwd.net/a607/o1/NHTSA/PedestrianSafety.wmv). For more information on the older driver course, contact Essie Wagner at 202-366-0932 or [esther.wagner@dot.gov](mailto:esther.wagner@dot.gov).*

## New FHWA Products, Websites of Interest

The Model Minimum Inventory of Roadway Elements (MMIRE) is moving toward final development and evaluation. MMIRE consists of 180 data elements, 128 of which are first priority with the remainder second priority. The intent of MMIRE is similar to the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC)—to develop a standardized set of data elements that all states can collect to improve their planning processes. The resultant MMIRE data will enhance the identification of problem roadway locations, facilitate programmatic decisions about those locations and enable better enforcement at those locations. MMIRE is intended to be a companion to MMUCC and will help states meet the requirements established under SAFETEA-LU to collect safety data on all roadways. Information about MMIRE can be found at [www.mmire.org](http://www.mmire.org). GHSA also has links to MMUCC and NEMSIS (the standardized EMS database) on its traffic records links page: [http://www.ghsa.org/html/links/safety\\_organizations.html#trafrecord](http://www.ghsa.org/html/links/safety_organizations.html#trafrecord).

In December 2008, FHWA published an updated regulation on the Section 148 Highway Safety Improvement Program and touched on some of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) requirements. There is now greater consistency between the SHSP statutory requirements and the implementing regulations. The new regulations clarify that the SHSP need not be project specific, requires states to regularly evaluate their SHSPs and mandates them to collect data on crash, vehicle,

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## Performance Measures for State Traffic Record Systems in Development

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), with the cooperation of GHSA, is developing performance measures for state traffic record systems. Each of the six core data systems—crash, vehicle, driver, roadway, enforcement-adjudication, and injury—will have at least one performance measure defined for each of six performance criteria—timeliness, accuracy, completeness, uniformity-consistency, integration, and accessibility.

The performance measures will be developed through a consensus process by a panel of experts from across the nation. Panel members have hands-on experience in data collection, data file management, and data use for each of the six core state data systems.

In February, the panel will meet to develop draft performance measures. In late Spring, a white paper will be issued summarizing the preliminary recommendations and requesting public comment on the draft measures. The draft measures also will be discussed at the July 2009 Traffic Records Forum and the 2009 GHSA Annual Meeting. The expert panel

will meet again in October 2009 to review all comments and produce the final list of performance measure recommendations.

States currently are required to establish and demonstrate progress using measures of traffic record performance in order to receive Sec. 408 Traffic Safety Information System Improvement Grants. All states have adopted some performance measures for this purpose, but the measures currently used vary enormously across the states. This project will produce a minimum set of measures that all states can use. Each state can then establish its own goals using these measures.

This project is a successor to the recently-developed measures for federal and state traffic safety performance. The report documenting those measures, *Traffic Safety Performance Measures for States and Federal Agencies* (DOT HS 811 025, August 2008), is available on the GHSA website, [www.ghsa.org](http://www.ghsa.org). See the link under Projects and Activities.

*The project is being conducted by the Preusser Research Group, Inc., in cooperation with GHSA. For more information, contact Jim Hedlund, the project director, at [jhedlund@sprynet.com](mailto:jhedlund@sprynet.com).*

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traffic and roadway (but not citation) data for all public roadways. The final regulation also specifies the process for flexing up to 10% of HSIP funds into other safety programs. A copy of the final rulemaking can be found by clicking on: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-30168.pdf>.

FHWA is also in the process of redesigning its Office of Safety website. New information has been added, including a link to all but three of the state SHSPs: [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/state\\_program/hsip/shsp/state\\_links.htm](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/state_program/hsip/shsp/state_links.htm).

Finally, FHWA has funded the development of several products to encourage state DOT planners to participate in safety planning, as required by SAFETEA-LU. These include a planner's desk reference about safety, one-page state safety facts sheets and a decision-makers guide to safety. If you are working with planners on your state's SHSP, these tools could be very helpful. Click on [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/state\\_program/scp/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/state_program/scp/). The site also contains a link to the Transportation Safety Planning Working Group website that provides additional resources such as case studies and a newsletter.



## Antilock Brakes on Motorcycles Found to Save Lives

Two new studies show that motorcycles equipped with antilock brakes can reduce both crashes and fatalities. As the number of motorcyclists on American roads increases (nearly 5,000 last year alone), and with it the number of crashes and deaths, equipping bikes with antilock brakes is also becoming more important.

The first study, conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), compared the rates of fatal crashes for motorcycles with and without antilock brakes. The results showed there were 6.6 fatal crashes per 10,000 registered motorcycles without antilocks during 2005-06. The same bike models, when equipped with antilocks, had a 38 percent lower rate of fatal crashes (4.1 per 10,000 registered bikes). IIHS statisticians note that the findings are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

The Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDA), an IIHS sister organization that examines insurance loss data, also conducted a study comparing insurance losses under collision coverage for 12 motorcycle models with optional antilock brakes, versus the same models without that option. Motorcyclists with antilocks were found to have 21 percent lower insurance losses than those without. Their claim frequency was also 19 percent lower than for bikes without antilocks.

Antilock breaks have been found to be more beneficial on motorcycles than on cars, because two wheeled vehicles are much less stable. Antilock breaks reduce wheel lockup during braking and can keep a motorcycle from overturning.

*For more information, visit [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org). Select Status Reports, Volume 43, Number 9.*



## Roadway Safety Award Applicants Sought

The Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are currently accepting applications for the 2009 National Roadway Safety Awards. RSF and FHWA recognize best practices in roadway safety improvements and publish the practices to help solve recurring roadway safety issues throughout the nation.

The competition includes three award categories: Infrastructure Improvements; Operational Improvements and Program Planning; and Development and Evaluation. Applicants can submit projects, programs, or activities that include effective and innovative safety agendas, and resourcefully employ various sources of aid including federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds.

Winners of the competition will receive: an invitation to attend a national-level recognition event in Washington, DC; local and national media coverage opportunities; appearance in trade press and other RSF and FHWA publications and websites; and meeting opportunities with key roadway safety officials and legislators in Washington, DC.

The deadline for submissions is June 1, 2009. *To learn more or to download an application, please visit [www.roadwaysafetyawards.org](http://www.roadwaysafetyawards.org).*

## NHTSA Report: 21 Drinking Age and Motorcycle Helmets Save Lives

A new statistical report by NHTSA illustrates the lifesaving impact of 21 drinking age laws and motorcycle helmet use. Minimum 21 drinking age laws prevented an estimated 4,441 drunken driving deaths in the last five years alone according to the report released on November 6. GHSA strongly supports the 21 drinking age and will push back against any effort to repeal it.

Former NHTSA Acting Administrator David Kelly presented the report at a MADD symposium on the topic of underage drinking. According to Kelly, “Turning our back on these laws would be a deadly mistake. Minimum drinking age laws are among the most effective measures ever used to reduce drunken driving deaths among America’s young people.”

The same report also notes that the number of lives saved by motorcycle helmets has risen sharply in recent years, paralleling an increase in motorcycle use. Estimates indicate that lives saved by helmets rose from 1,173 in 2003 to 1,784 in 2007. For the five-year period ending last year, more than 7,502 lives were spared because motorcyclists used helmets. GHSA continues to support helmet laws and will urge Congress to allow states to spend federal highway safety funds on helmet promotion in the next highway reauthorization.

The NHTSA report is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/6bo2sc>. GHSA’s positions on the 21 drinking age law and motorcycle helmets can be found in the issues section of the GHSA website: <http://www.ghsa.org/html/issues/index.html>.



## NCHRP Evaluates Behavioral Highway Safety Programs

A new report issued by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), *Effectiveness of Behavioral Highway Safety Countermeasures*, is intended to help states select the programs, projects and activities that will have the greatest potential for reducing the number of highway deaths and injuries.

The report draws in large part on the publication *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices* (available for download from the GHSA website). It estimates the effectiveness of each of the 104 countermeasures, classified into one of four categories: voluntary action; law or regulation; laws plus enhancements; and sanctions and treatments of offenders. Strategies are also presented for estimating when countermeasures within each of the classifications are likely to be cost effective.

Chapter 7 contains a guide to using the information summarized in the report, encouraging states to focus on countermeasures that:

- Have proven to be effective;
- Can be accomplished within existing financial and political constraints; and
- Will provide the greatest benefit/cost return on invested resources.

The report calls on states to examine countermeasures that are likely to be effective, avoid countermeasures that have been found unlikely to be effective, and stay away from any countermeasures known to have negative consequences. It also provides a methodology for determining the cost effectiveness of certain countermeasures.

The current strategy for countermeasure selection is to (1) conduct problem identification, (2) identify priority areas, (3) formulate goals and objectives for each priority area, and, finally, (4) select countermeasures to accomplish those goals. This report encourages states to shift their strategy by reversing steps three and four—identifying cost-effective countermeasures that can be implemented before formulating realistic objectives based on the expected effectiveness of the identified countermeasures.

For a copy of the full report, visit [www.trb.org/TRBNet/ProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=459](http://www.trb.org/TRBNet/ProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=459).

The 4th edition *Countermeasures That Work* publication is available at: [www.ghsa.org/html/publications/index.html#countermeasures](http://www.ghsa.org/html/publications/index.html#countermeasures).

Additionally, the new NCHRP 500 motorcycle safety report is available at [www.national-academics.org/trbbookstore.edu](http://www.national-academics.org/trbbookstore.edu)



## State Farm: Committed to Saving Teens' Lives

*By: Amy Spong, Public Affairs Specialist, State Farm Auto Safety Unit*

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among teenagers. If we maintain the status quo, we will lose more than 100,000 teens to automobile crashes in the next ten years.\* State Farm® is taking a stand against this epidemic through research and engagement in communities, schools, families, and public policy initiatives.

### Research

Saving the lives of teen drivers requires changing behavior and social norms. In 2009 and 2010 we will begin to develop and implement tools to save lives, prevent crashes, and reduce injuries. The first step in this process was the National Young Driver Survey conducted and released by State Farm and The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), who have been research partners for over a decade on auto safety issues and concerns.

### Communities and Schools

No initiative of this magnitude could be successful without the involvement of local communities and schools. In 2007, State Farm, CHOP, and National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) advocated for the first National Teen Driver Safety Week (NTDSW), featuring a youth led summit to discuss the causes of this national epidemic and possible solutions.

The second annual NTDSW focused on increasing awareness of teen driver and passenger safety in local communities and through school activities, grassroots efforts, and national advertising.

Additionally, Project Ignition is an innovative program reflecting State Farm's commitment to teen driver safety. In collaboration with NYLC ([www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org)), Project Ignition provides grants to non-profit student-led organizations. These organizations often find their inspiration close to home, sometimes through personal tragedy. Their creative and powerful messages reach across town, county, and state lines. For information about how your community or school can get involved, visit [www.sfprojectignition.com](http://www.sfprojectignition.com).

### Families

State Farm understands how daunting it can be to teach a teen to drive. We have developed tools for our agents to share with teens and parents to help ease this transition. Steer Clear® invites students to watch an instructional DVD, keep a journal about their behind-the-wheel experience, and open lines of communication with their parents about learning to drive. Upon completion, students are eligible to receive up to a 15 percent discount on their auto insurance.

In addition to Steer Clear®, State Farm agents offer a Parent-Teen Handbook (available in English and Spanish) to facilitate ongoing discussion about safe driving. We also started a Facebook page to enhance dialog among parents and teens. Our 2008 NTDSW spokesperson and father of two teen drivers, Cal Ripken, Jr., shares his personal story in a video.

### Public Policy

State Farm is using its resources at a grass roots level across the United States to advance the conversation about Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL). We stand behind restrictions on wireless communication devices, passengers, and nighttime driving. Research shows that rigorous GDL laws can reduce teen crashes by up to 40 percent.\*\* We have created a GDL Toolkit to make it easy for legislators to learn the facts, understand our position, and take the steps to make changes to laws that will help save lives.

"Like a good neighbor" is more than a slogan. Good Neighbor service means being there when and where we're needed to do what we've promised. By focusing our efforts on teen driver research and engagement in communities, schools, families and public policy, we can truly make a difference. No insurance company is more committed to saving the lives of teen drivers.

*Please contact Amy Spong at State Farm for copies of our GDL Legislative Toolkit at [amy.spong.pkmf@statefarm.com](mailto:amy.spong.pkmf@statefarm.com) or 309-735-0908. For more information, visit: [www.statefarm.com/teendriving](http://www.statefarm.com/teendriving).*

\*Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System Analysis by: The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

\*\*National Safety Council



## In 2009, Resolve to Strengthen Your Partnerships

**By: Kendell Poole, Director, Tennessee Governor's Office of Highway Safety**

As we start a new year, many of us make resolutions. It is a great time to start new projects or ideas that may have never gotten off of the ground. Some promises we make to ourselves may be to rectify a bad habit that cropped up and we are trying desperately to break it (or at least curb it a little). Quite possibly, we simply want to continue a good thing that we have already begun. Some goals are personal, and some may be professional. I certainly hope that you have both.

My professional resolution is a continuance of a wonderful effort in our state to enhance our partnership with law enforcement. It is my belief that by taking forward this goal over the past few years, we have made our state safer and a better place to live. Research and evaluation of traffic fatalities demonstrate this success. As we added to our participation numbers and put our "mouth where our money is," we noticed an amazing transformation among law enforcement across the state. We proved that we could produce results by fortifying these relationships without just paying lip service. We backed it up, and it meant the world to the men and women who protect our communities every day. They began to embrace us with open arms as we traveled across the state virtually every time we were invited to participate in one of their activities or mobilizations.

Without a law enforcement background, I wondered how I would be treated as I reached out. My fears have dissipated as the honest and straightforward approach that we adopted continues to produce never before seen results in our fatality numbers. As 2008 closed, Tennessee appears to be down at least 15 percent in roadway fatalities in 2008, and that comes after a 6 percent decrease in 2007. As GHSA Members, we know that it takes the four E's working together to make it work. It was very apparent that we were coming up short in one of our E's, and by correcting that, we were able to create a synergy in saving lives that surpassed our own goals.

To understand our law enforcement partners, we have to get out with them. Participate in sobriety checkpoints. Go to regional and network meetings. If you have Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs), use them to your fullest extent. If you don't have LELs, do everything that you can to get them. To fully comprehend what law enforcement officers are up against on a daily basis, we have to stay abreast of the challenges that confront them. The payoff will not only come professionally as your fatality numbers decrease, but you might receive a letter like Chief Dennis Cramer in Collegedale, Tennessee did just before Christmas, resulting from a highway office sponsored checkpoint.

*Chief Cramer,*

*I want to send a huge thank you out to the Collegedale Police Department! Last Saturday evening my fiancé and I were going home and came across a sobriety checkpoint. As I watched my fiancé stop our car and get his license out, I started to tear up. The officer explained to us what he was doing and asked if Nick had consumed any alcohol that night. Nick was shaking as he replied, "Absolutely not." We sat there for a few minutes in total shock and then softly told the cop "thank you." I almost lost my composure at that exact moment.*

*You see, Chief Cramer, my fiancé, Nick, lost his 3 year old daughter on October 20, 2007 to a drunk driver. This was a beautiful child whose life was tragically taken away due to a stupid decision by someone else. The man that hit Kasey was a repeat offender and is now serving 25 years for her death. Kasey's brother was six years old and was in the accident too. He saw every gruesome detail of the accident and watched his sister die in his arms. We have recently moved to Collegedale and feel very thankful to know that we have such a great police department in our area. This was the first sobriety checkpoint that Nick has gone through since the wreck. If all police departments did their job this well, Kasey may still be with us today. Please send our thanks to all of the officers and let them know we appreciate their hard work. Thank you for helping to keep drunk drivers off the road and keeping everyone safe!*

*Nick and Stacy*

This letter reminds us of our critical mission and provides further motivation to continue overcoming obstacles and taking our enforcement efforts to the next level.



## Georgia's on GHSA's Mind in 2009!

Plans are underway for GHSA's 2009 Annual Meeting, being held August 29–September 2 in Savannah, Georgia. This year's theme, "Toward Zero Deaths: Every Life Counts," highlights the Association's ambitious fatality reduction goal. Registration will begin in May.

To receive registration materials, please visit [www.ghsa.org](http://www.ghsa.org) and click on the Annual Meeting icon.

- March 9–17      **St. Patricks Day Campaign**  
"Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving"  
[www.stopimpaireddriving.org](http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org)
- March 29–April 1      **Lifesavers Conference**  
Nashville, TN  
[www.lifesaversconference.org](http://www.lifesaversconference.org)
- April 6–10      **National Work Zone Awareness Week**  
[www.atssa.com/cs/root/news\\_pr/nwzaw](http://www.atssa.com/cs/root/news_pr/nwzaw)
- April 29–May 1      **AASHTO Standing Committee on Highway Traffic Safety and SHSP Peer Exchange**  
Chicago, IL
- May      **Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month**
- May 18–31      **Click It or Ticket Mobilization**



## GHSA Remembers Kevin Quinlan



GHSA and the entire highway safety community were deeply saddened at the sudden loss of Kevin Quinlan in December. Quinlan was a tireless advocate for highway safety as Chief of NTSB's Safety Advocacy Division. He worked closely with GHSA Members to bring about numerous lifesaving laws. According to Congresswoman Shelly Berkley (D-NV), who honored Quinlan with a statement in the

Congressional Record, "Quinlan was a mentor to countless traffic safety advocates and an inspiration to the thousands of people who lost loved ones to the preventable crime of drunk driving. One of his greatest passions was the fight to stop drunk driving. His expert testimony led to the passage of many effective countermeasures across this nation." GHSA Chairman Vernon F. Betkey, Jr., said that "Kevin was a particularly close friend to the Association and its member states. He will be greatly missed."

## Alcohol Screening Conference Scheduled for May

"Public Health in the Emergency Department: Surveillance, Screening, and Intervention," is a conference taking place on May 13, 2009, in New Orleans. It is being held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine.

The conference will cover Alcohol Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). A key goal is the identification of strategies to demonstrate the importance of ED-based health behavior intervention to educators, policy makers, and funders.

For more information, visit [www.saem.org](http://www.saem.org), click on Meetings, and select AEMCC (Public Health in the ED Consensus Conference).

## Study Shows Unlicensed Teen Drivers More Prone to Fatal Crashes

A new article published in the journal *Pediatrics* examines the driving habits of unlicensed teen drivers and is the result of a research alliance between Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and State Farm Insurance Companies®. The article concludes that unlicensed teen drivers are over-represented in fatal crashes.

The study compared data from the 2006 National Young Driver Survey (NYDS) of more than 5,500 teens across the country with 2006 national fatality data. While the NYDS shows that about 6 percent of students in grades 9 through 11 said they drive unsupervised without a license, national fatality data reports that 20 percent of all 14- to 18-year-old

drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2006 did not have a license. This illustrates that unlicensed teen drivers are involved in a disproportionate number of fatal crashes.

Unlicensed drivers were found to be far more likely to engage in unsafe driving behaviors, which may lead to fatal crashes. Dr. Flaura Koplan Winston, co-scientific director of CHOP's Center for Injury Research and Prevention and a co-author of the study, says that "Unlicensed teens are more likely to report not wearing a seat belt, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and driving without a purpose, behaviors known to be associated with fatal crashes."

The study found that unlicensed teen drivers were more likely to live in central cities or rural areas and identify themselves as African American or Hispanic. However, other factors, such as unpaid fines or registration fees, can also lead to driving without a license.

The report concludes that further research is needed to understand the barriers to licensing for teens. Researchers also note that it is especially important for parents and driver education instructors to reach out to help unlicensed teen drivers who are at high risk for unsafe driving practices.

*For more information, read the press release: <http://tinyurl.com/5v4w2p>.*

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The States' Voice on Highway Safety

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