

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Hayzlett at 1:30 P.M. on March 13, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Hank Avila, Kansas Legislative Research
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes Office
Betty Boaz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Deb Miller, Secretary, KS Department of Transportation
Robert Waller, Chief Administrator, Bd. of Emergency Medical Services
Ed Klump, representing KS Association of Chiefs of Police
Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director of Health, Department of Health and Environment
Captain Scott Holladay, Shawnee County Sheriff's Office
Cindy D'Ercole, KS Action for Children

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Hayzlett opened the meeting by opening the hearing on **SB 211**.

SB 211 - Safety belts, primary enforcement for occupants under 18 years of age

The Committee received a briefing explaining the differences between **HB 2136** and **SB 211**. The first proponent for this bill was Deb Miller, Secretary of the Department of Transportation. (Attachment #1) According to Secretary Miller, as amended, this bill alleviates a concern brought forward by the Office of Judicial Administration. Secretary Miller said experiences in other states have shown that when a primary law is enacted, the use of seat belts increases. In addition, a primary law with a higher penalty sends a message to motorists that safety belt use is an important safety issue that the state takes seriously.

The next proponent was Robert Waller, representing the Board of Emergency Medical Services. (Attachment #2) Mr. Waller said according to a report from the National Highway Traffic Safety Association, seat belt use rates are higher where laws are stronger, meaning a primary seat belt law motivates individuals to wear a seat belt. Mr. Waller said the money derived from the bill would help attendants and services with training and equipment. He said **SB 211** as amended, requires passenger car occupants between 14 and 18 years old to wear a seat belt regardless of where they are seated in the vehicle and increases the seat belt fine from \$10 to \$60.

Ed Klumpp, representing the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, was the third proponent to speak. (Attachment #3) Mr. Klumpp stated several reasons the Committee had heard for not enacting more stringent seat belt laws. He said that younger passengers and drivers are more at risk of being involved in an accident and that is the heart of this bill. He said this bill addresses the occupants ages 14 - 17 and will mandate they wear seat belts in all seat positions of a passenger car. Mr. Klumpp said it would also make the enforcement of this provision a primary offense while leaving the existing laws on those ages 18 or older a secondary offense.

Chairman recognized Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director, Div. of Health, (Attachment #4) Dr. Rodenberg said unintentional injuries continue to kill more young Kansans than any other cause and motor vehicle crashes are by far the leading cause of death. He said when we look specifically at children ages 14 through 17, 30 Kansas kids died and 2,613 more were injured as a result of car crashes in our state in 2005 alone (KDOT). He concluded by saying they believe that passage of **SB 211** would result in progress toward meeting the national Healthy People 2010 goals to increase seat belt usage and to reduce death rates due to motor vehicle crashes. He said more importantly, it would begin an effort to save Kansas families from the pain, anguish, and financial burden of preventable death and injury from lack of seat belt use.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Transportation Committee at 1:30 P.M. on March 13, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

Captain Scott Holladay, representing the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office, was the next proponent. (Attachment #5) Captain Holladay said the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies across the state actively enforce occupant protection laws, yet Kansas is still below the national average for seat belt use. He concluded by saying that as adults it is our responsibility to set good examples for our youth and as legislators, you can show teens that you care by passing **SB 211**.

Chairman Hayzlett recognized Cindy D'Ercole as the last proponent to testify. (Attachment #6) Ms. D'Ercole told the Committee that Kansas Action for Children supports the enactment of SB 211 because traffic crashes are the number one cause of death for teens and one of the key factors is unbuckled seat belts. She said increasing seat belt use is the single most effective and immediate way to save lives and reduce the number of injuries on Kansas roadways. She concluded by saying research shows that secondary, or primary, seat belt laws are much more effective in increasing safety belt use - that teens are more likely to buckle up when there is a perceived risk of receiving a citation.

The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the written testimony submitted by the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Kansas Peace Officers Association and James R. Hanni representing AAA Allied Group.

Chairman Hayzlett asked if there were any other proponents or any opponents who were not on the agenda, there were none.

After the Committee asked questions of the conferees, Representative Ballard asked a young lady seated in the audience what she thought about increasing the fine for driving without a safety belt - if the higher penalty would cause her to think more about using a safety belt. The young lady, Lakin Tuxhorn, senior at Smith Center Jr./Sr. High School, told the Committee she had been involved in an accident a year earlier and had not been wearing a safety belt. Lakin told the Committee about her injuries and the strain on her family and that now she always uses a safety belt. Lakin told the Committee she thought the higher penalty was a good idea. A friend of Lakin's, Saisha Eastes, thought the penalty ought to be between what it is now and what was proposed. The Committee thanked the young ladies for their willingness to step forward and answer questions and their candid comments.

Chairman drew the Committee's attention to Minutes of the March 7, 2007, meeting. Representative Ballard made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by Representative Humerickhouse and the motion carried.

There being no further business before the Committee the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be on March 14, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 519-S.

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE 3-13-07

NAME	REPRESENTING
Robert Walker	KBMS
Lori Haskett	KDHE
Scott Holladay	Shawnee Co. Sheriff
Sarah Green	KHI News Service
Carmen Albrecht	KDOR
Terry Mitchell	KDOR
Ron Gabel	AAA
Deb Miller	KDOT
Magee Thompson	KDOT
Harvey Green	KDHE
Jim Harri	AAA
Pete Bodyk	KDOT
Suzanne Winkle	KAC
Ginny D'Angelo	KAC
Harmon Eskradz	" "
Richard Swaminis	Hummer & Assoc.

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE _____

NAME	REPRESENTING
Star JMO	John Peterson

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE 3-13-07

NAME	REPRESENTING
Ed Klumpp	Ks Assoc of Cities of Police
Kyle Smith	Kansas Peace Officers' Assoc.
Tom Whitaker	Ks Motor Carriers Assn
David Roche	Federal Highway Administration

**TESTIMONY BEFORE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**REGARDING SENATE BILL 211
Primary Seat Belt Law Up to 18 years of age**

March 13, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

My name is Deb Miller, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation. I am here to provide testimony in support of amended Senate Bill 211, a primary seat belt law for Kansans up to 18 years of age. As amended, this bill alleviates a concern brought forward by the Office of Judicial Administration.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and serious injury for teenagers in the United States. In 2005, Kansas drivers 14 through 17 years old were involved in more than 9,000 crashes on Kansas roadways. According to research data provided by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), safety belt use is the single most effective countermeasure available to passenger vehicle occupants in preventing fatalities and injuries in highway traffic crashes. When lap/shoulder safety belts are used, the risk of fatal injury to front-seat passenger car occupants is reduced by 45 percent and the risk of moderate-to-critical injury is reduced by 50 percent.

Experiences in other states have shown that when a primary law is enacted, the use of seat belts increases. Enacting a primary law for this age group will help to lower the number of serious injuries and fatalities involving teenage drivers. This bill may only affect a small percentage of the Kansas population, but that population is over-represented in crashes and a law that will influence them to be safer in motor vehicles is good public policy.

In addition, a primary law with a higher penalty sends a message to motorists that safety belt use is an important safety issue that the state takes seriously. Statistics show that increased fines result in increased seat belt usage. This bill would increase the fine from \$10 to \$60. A portion of the additional monies from the increased penalty would be utilized by KDOT to enhance and upgrade traffic record systems across the state. Additional funds would also be created to support trauma care and emergency medical services; all in an effort to create a healthier Kansas.

At KDOT, we will continue to look for ways to increase the safety of the driving public, and we believe that this is a positive step towards that direction.

House Transportation
Date: 3-13-07
Attachment # 1

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
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KANSAS

DENNIS ALLIN, M.D., CHAIR
ROBERT WALLER, CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Testimony

Date: March 13, 2007
To: House Committee on Transportation
From: Robert Waller, Chief Administrator
RE: Senate Bill 211

House Transportation
Date: 3-13-07
Attachment # 2

Chairman Hayzlett and members of the House Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Senate Bill 211, my name is Robert Waller and I am the Chief Administrator for the Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services (KSBEMS).

It is difficult to fully express the magnitude of seat belts and the number of lives they save, although, I know, statistics provided by the Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas Highway Patrol, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) attempt to statistically note the importance of seat belts. This Legislature, through bill passage and the Kansas Department of Transportation's program "Click it, or ticket", have made your concerns clear and emphasized the importance of seat belts and their usage in saving lives. So, now we look at seat belts from another angle, and that is "motivation."

According to NHTSA Traffic Safety Facts (Seat Belt Use in 2006) report, seat belt use rates are higher where laws are stronger (a combined use rate of 85 percent in "primary" states as opposed to 74 percent in "secondary" states). Meaning, a primary seat belt law "motivates" individuals to wear a seat belt. Those individuals the bill attempts to "motivate" are children, pre-teens and teenagers who may not understand or recognize the importance of wearing seat belts. For EMS, it aids attendants and services arriving on scene to care for a patient with minor scratches and cuts from an accident, as opposed to strapping the patient to a spine board, fitting a c-collar, beginning an IV, and rushing the patient immediately in the emergency room due to the extent of their injuries. "Usually" the difference between those two patients is the use of a seat belt. At that moment, neither the patient nor their family (especially the parents) notes the difference between a primary and secondary law.

Secondly, the money derived from the bill would help attendants and services with training and equipment. With EMS, both rural and urban coming to the realization and understanding of their place in homeland security plans and operations, equipment needs, training for personnel, and access to new personnel, bills such as SB 211 sets up the mechanism to support and grow EMS in the state. Also, it enables services and the six (6) EMS Regional councils with funding to finance training and equipment that otherwise may be an expense that falls through the budgetary net. Earlier this year, through funding provided by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, KBEMS provided 322 pediatric spine boards and 54 Broselow kits to services throughout the state. Some, if not most of the smaller services, did not have the equipment and even as

KBEMS contacted services to ask what was needed, and the items sent, service directors still called to say "can I keep them." They called the State to simply say thank you and acknowledge that the equipment provided could not have been acquired within their current finances. The passage of SB 211 would facilitate these types of equipment acquisitions.

Bill Language

Senate Bill 211, as amended, requires passenger car occupants between 14 and 18 years old to wear a seat belt regardless of where they are seated in the vehicle. It also increases the seat belt fine from \$10 to \$60, and provides the following funding amounts to the particular state entity:

- Credit \$17 to the EMS revolving fund all moneys will be used by the emergency medical services board to improve and enhance emergency medical services in the state.
- Credit \$17 to the trauma fund established under K.S.A. 75-5670,
- Credit \$16 to the traffic records enhancement fund shall be used by the department of transportation for the purpose of enhancing and upgrading the traffic records systems in the state.

Conclusion

Simply, members of the Committee the passage of SB 211 helps protect our most precious asset our children. Seat belts save lives, and this Legislature and this Committee has made it a point to emphasize just that....the lives of the citizens of Kansas. Lastly, with passage, you provide a financial mechanism through application and distribution for the KBEMS to aid EMS services and attendants throughout the state. Access to updated equipment and the latest training keeps EMS on the cutting edge in providing rapid pre-hospital care. Although, KBEMS has and does provide some funding to aid services, much more could be done and the financial allocation of funding from the bill would accomplish that goal.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of SB 211 and I will stand for any questions you may have.

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
REFERENCE SB 211
Presented by Ed Klumpp
On behalf of the
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police

March 13, 2007

Chairman Hayzlett and committee members,

This testimony is in support of SB 211. Every year too many Kansans needlessly lose their lives or suffer serious and often permanent injuries because seatbelts are not in use when motor vehicle accidents occur. Kansas law enforcement and others have made strong efforts to educate the public on the benefits of seat belt use. Kansas is at a crossroads where improved compliance will be dependant on the strength of the seatbelt laws.

We have heard several common reasons for not enacting more stringent seat belt laws. Some will argue that seat belt use only protects a person's own safety and the state shouldn't force people to protect themselves. Many believe a person choosing not to wear a seat belt only increase the risk to them. But we know this is not always the case. When a passenger in a vehicle is not seat belted in an accident they can fly around inside the car striking the interior of the car and objects in the car, for example striking passengers that try to protect themselves by wearing their seatbelts. These seat belted passengers can then suffer serious injuries just by being struck by the unbelted passenger.

We have also heard those that project a primary seat belt law will result in racial profiling stops by officers who can't tell for sure whether a person is seat belted or not but stop the car anyway. This is a hollow argument. If an officer is not in a position to tell if a person is seat belted or not, no stop would be made for what would amount to the suspicion of a seatbelt violation. There are existing methods to deal with such officer conduct if racial profiling does occur. The outcome of this bill will have nothing to do with racial profiling.

One of the arguments we heard was that an officer meeting a car on a highway at highway speeds would have a very difficult time determining if the seat belt was being worn or not. There is no doubt there are circumstances where the officers could not determine if the seat belt laws are being violated or not. But there are also many circumstances where it will be clear whether or not the law is being violated. This can be said about most traffic laws. If the criteria for deciding if a traffic law should be enacted is not being able to cite a single example where an officer would not be sure if a violation occurred, we would have very few traffic laws on the books. We would have to remove the red light laws, DUI laws, stop sign laws, speed limits, and many more.

We also know that after the educational and awareness programs, many of those that choose not to wear seatbelts are risk takers. These are drivers who also engage in risky driving habits resulting in their involvement in more accidents. This is supported by the statistics. The surveys

House Transportation
Date: 3-13-07
Attachment # 3

indicate about 30% of the people are not wearing seatbelts while about 70% of the fatalities in Kansas are unbelted.

In addition, we know that younger passengers and drivers are more at risk of being involved in an accident. That is the heart of this bill. This bill addresses the occupants ages 14-17 and will mandate they wear seat belts in all seat positions of a passenger car. It will also make the enforcement of this provision a primary offense while leaving the existing laws on those ages 18 or older a secondary offense.

This bill is an improvement over the existing law and is a step forward. It will at least protect our children—provided they don't have an unbelted adult fellow vehicle occupant smashing into them in an accident.

The Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police supports primary seat belt laws for all vehicle passengers. We would prefer a bill that would accomplish that. While this bill does not achieve that in totality, it is movement in a positive direction providing added safety for our children ages 14 through 17.

We also support the provisions for fines and the distribution of those fines as provided in this bill, including the creation and funding of the traffic records enhancement fund and the EMS revolving fund. The traffic records enhancement fund will provided much needed funding to draw in federal grant dollars to support the development of improved traffic accident data and traffic citation data systems. Such systems will increase the efficiency and accuracy of those processes and provide a quicker analysis of problem areas needing addressed by traffic engineers and traffic enforcement. The EMS revolving fund will provide funding needed to improve EMS response and critical care abilities for accident victims and others in need of critical emergency medical care.

We urge you to recommend SB 211 favorably for passage.



Ed Klumpp
Chief of Police-Retired
Topeka Police Department

Legislative Committee Chair
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police
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Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

Division of Health

Testimony on SB211

To

House Committee on Transportation

**By Howard Rodenberg, MD, MPH
Director, Division of Health and State Health Officer
Kansas Department of Health and Environment**

March 13, 2007

Chairman Hayzlett and Members of the Committee, I am Dr. Howard Rodenberg. I serve as Director of the Division of Health at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and as State Health Officer. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Senate Bill 211, which proposes to establish a primary seat belt law for teenagers ages 14 through 17, and to raise the fines for secondary seat belt enforcement in adults.

Deaths and injuries from trauma were characterized nearly 40 years ago as the neglected disease of modern society. However, as the saying goes, the more things change the more they remain the same. Unintentional injuries continue to kill more young Kansans than any other cause, and motor vehicle crashes are by far and away the leading cause of death. When we look specifically at children ages 14 through 17, 30 Kansas kids died and 2,613 more were injured as a result of car crashes in our state in 2005 alone (KDOT). Two out of three teens killed as occupants of motor vehicles are unrestrained. The financial costs of the 16,156 crashes involving drivers ages 14 – 19 in 2005 totaled nearly \$630,000,000.

The effectiveness of primary seat belt laws has been well established, both within the literature and through the experience of other states (highlighted in a USA Today cover article from January of this year). The experience of other states indicates that deaths from motor vehicle crashes can be cut by a third by increasing seat belt use. If we place this data in a Kansas context, establishing a primary law for drivers age 14 to 17 through SB 211 may save 10 lives a year, significantly decrease the number of injuries suffered by Kansas teens, and slash the health care costs of motor vehicle crashes. While this number is a far cry from what might be achieved through a primary law covering all occupants of a motor vehicle regardless of age, it is still a positive step forward. Moreover, it targets a population at special risk; while teen drivers account for only 6.7% of all Kansas registered drivers, they are involved in 20.1% of all crashes.

And instilling good seat belt use habits early in one's driving career should establish practices for a lifetime, providing long-term benefits to all.

SB 211 also proposes to raise the fine for a secondary violation of the seat belt law to \$60.00. The benefit of this approach is also supported by data; according to the Council of State Governments' Healthy States Initiative, the higher the fine for motorist who breaks the law, the more likely they are to use a safety belt. For example, if a state with secondary enforcement and a \$10 fine for violations changes to a primary enforcement and a \$50 fine, it could see up to a 15 percent increase in safety belt use. Awareness of monetary fines for traffic offenses can be a strong incentive for improving driving safety.

The experience of the State of Washington is an example of the effect of increasing secondary enforcement of a set belt law. When Washington raised it's fines to \$86, seat belt use shot up dramatically, and it became the state with the highest seat belt use where a primary law was not in place. While Kansas and Washington are different states, it seems reasonable to expect some degree of improvement in seat belt use in Kansas as a result of stronger secondary enforcement. (It is of interest to note that Washington has subsequently adopted a full primary seat belt law, as 25 other states have already done.)

I truly believe that all the members of this committee recognize the value of seat belts. I would like to think that all the members of this committee buckle up, and encourage their loved ones and friends to do the same. Nobody would wish to experience, or wish upon another, some of the pain and anguish you've heard in the past few weeks from people who have lost children and siblings from the non-use of seat belts. And the legislature has already made clear their intent that Kansans use seat belts by establishing the current enforcement provisions. SB 211 is not so much a new law as much as a reinforcement of the historic legislative intent in a fashion to make the current law "stick" and lay the foundation for seat belt use in the next generations of drivers.

Several weeks ago, I had the opportunity to speak with this committee about another traffic safety bill. At that time, I mentioned that bills such as these presented a rare opportunity to use the leadership roles you have to effect positive and lasting change. These bills allow you to save lives and prevent injuries with a simple vote. There are no massive outlays of funds or complex bureaucratic structures required for this bill to have its' desired effect.

The other thing the bill does is to prevent a tragedy from occurring to one of you. One of the stories in the trauma community concerns the reason why the State of Maryland has one of the best trauma systems in the country. It became so because the son of the Governor's best friend died in an automobile accident. It would give me, and all of us in the trauma community, no pleasure to see this bill become law because one of you suffers a personal loss. Think of this as your own dose of preventive medicine for the session.

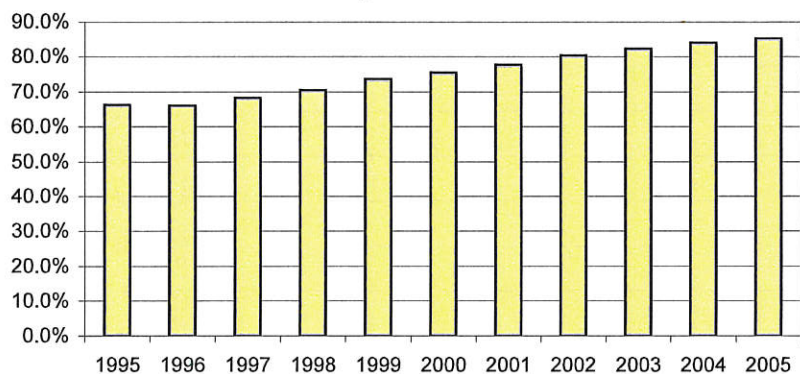
We believe that passage of SB 211 would result in progress toward meeting the national Healthy People 2010 goals to increase seat belt usage and to reduce death rates due to motor vehicle crashes. More importantly, it would begin an effort to save Kansas families from the pain, anguish, and financial burden of preventable death and injury from lack of seat belt use.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this information to the committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

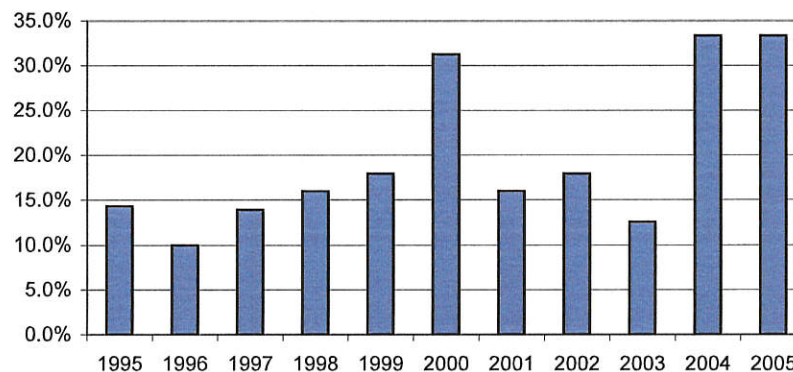
14 - 17 Year Old Occupants* in Accidents - Safety Restraint Usage** History

Year	Occupants in Accidents	Occupants Using Safety Belts	% Using Safety Belts	Deaths	Using Safety Belts	% of Use	Injuries	Using Safety Belts	% of Use	Unharmed or Unknown	Using Safety Belts	% of Use
1995	23,005	15,251	66.3%	21	3	14.3%	4,015	1,896	47.2%	18,969	13,352	70.4%
1996	23,422	15,487	66.1%	50	5	10.0%	4,185	1,934	46.2%	19,187	13,548	70.6%
1997	24,929	17,019	68.3%	36	5	13.9%	4,269	2,177	51.0%	20,624	14,837	71.9%
1998	25,343	17,867	70.5%	25	4	16.0%	4,313	2,245	52.1%	21,005	15,618	74.4%
1999	24,797	18,249	73.6%	39	7	17.9%	4,021	2,222	55.3%	20,737	16,020	77.3%
2000	23,510	17,747	75.5%	48	15	31.3%	3,773	2,218	58.8%	19,689	15,514	78.8%
2001	22,982	17,857	77.7%	50	8	16.0%	3,715	2,192	59.0%	19,217	15,657	81.5%
2002	21,865	17,568	80.3%	39	7	17.9%	3,351	2,110	63.0%	18,475	15,451	83.6%
2003	20,377	16,765	82.3%	40	5	12.5%	3,107	2,061	66.3%	17,230	14,699	85.3%
2004	19,400	16,312	84.1%	30	10	33.3%	2,906	1,952	67.2%	16,464	14,350	87.2%
2005	17,131	14,620	85.3%	30	10	33.3%	2,613	1,775	67.9%	14,488	12,835	88.6%
11-Year Total	246,761	184,742	74.9%	408	79	19.4%	40,268	22,782	56.6%	206,085	161,881	78.6%

Percent of Occupant Safety Belt Use
Ages 14 - 17



Percent of Occupant Safety Belt Use
Deaths: Ages 14 - 17

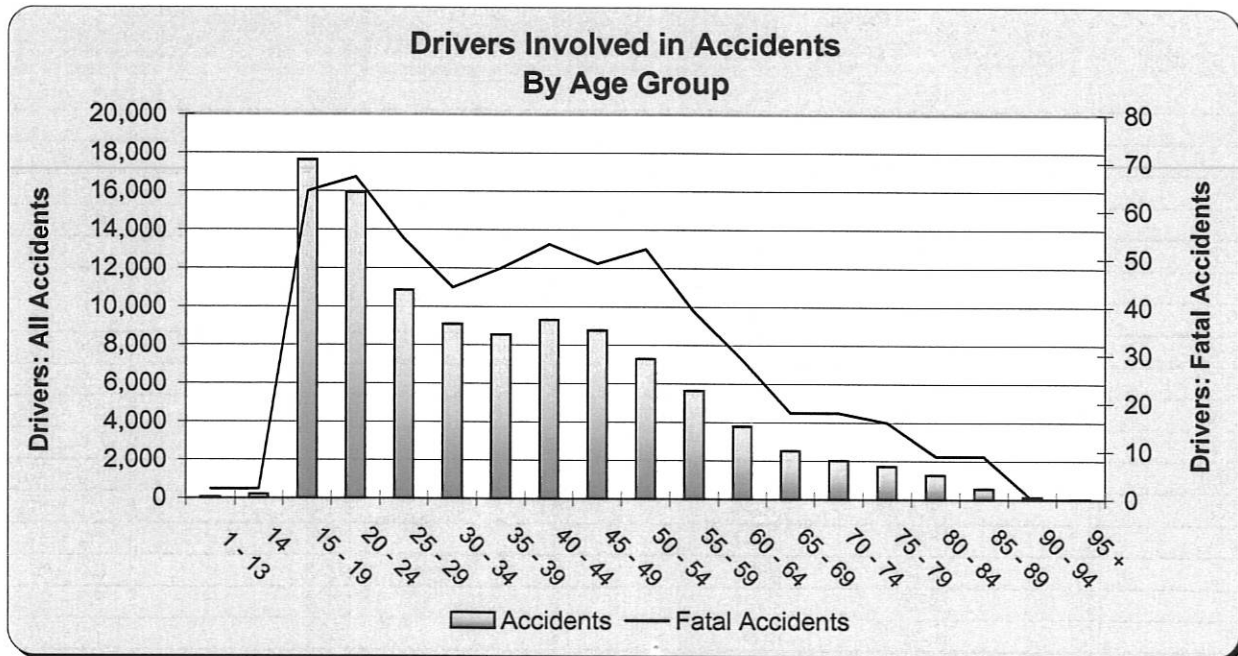


* Excludes occupants in vehicle body types: motorcycle, moped, farm equipment, all-terrain-vehicle, bus, train, emergency vehicle, other, and unknown
 ** Excludes airbag only, helmet, eye protection, and unknown restraint use.

DRIVER AGE SUMMARY

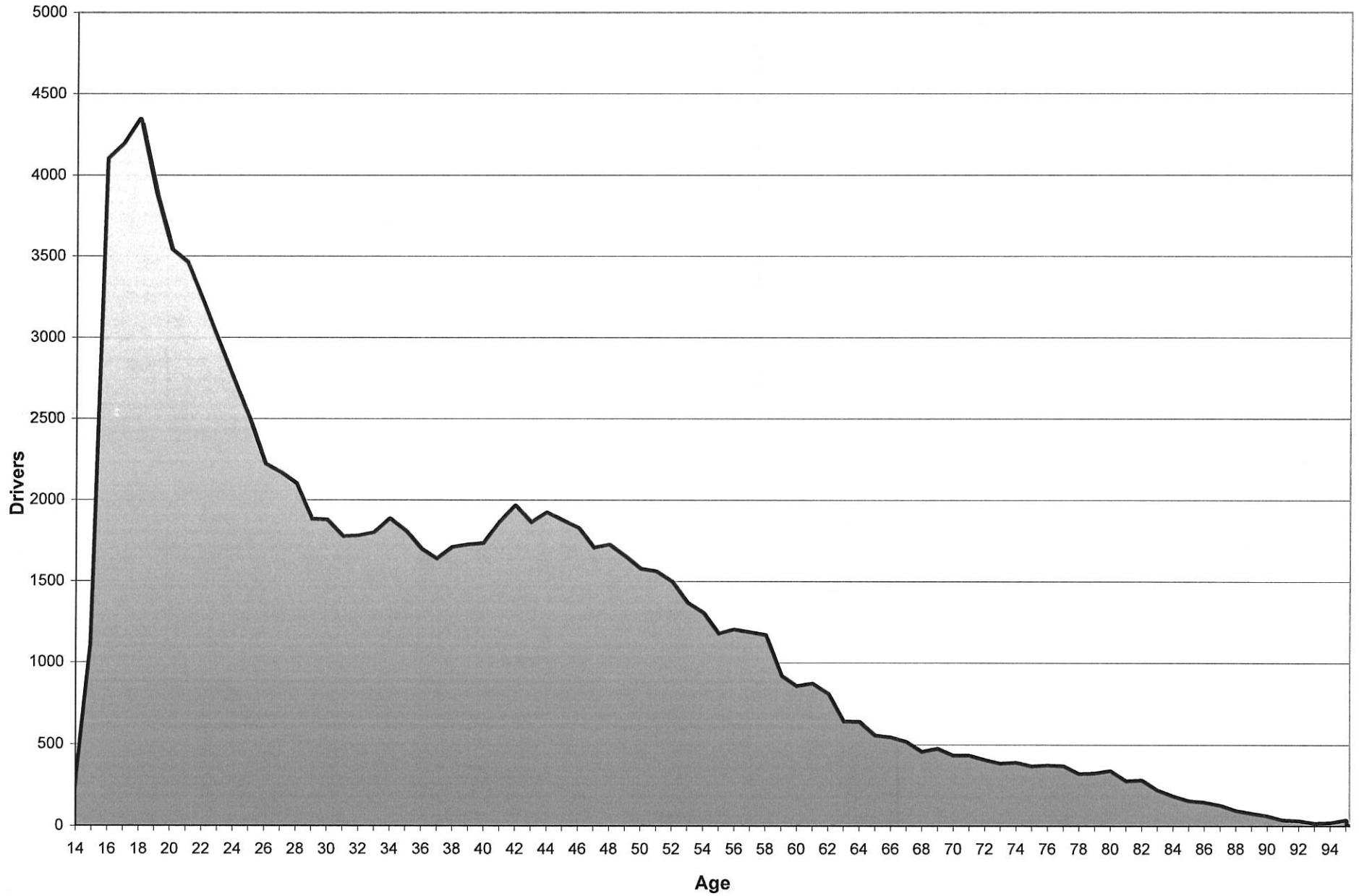
By Age Group

Driver Age	DRIVERS Involved In...			Accidents Per Age Group		
	Accidents	Fatal Accidents	Injury Accidents	Total	Fatal	Injury
1 - 13	65	2	28	65	2	28
14	213	2	70	212	2	70
15 - 19	17,628	64	4,701	15,967	63	4,315
20 - 24	15,941	67	4,129	14,807	66	3,797
25 - 29	10,865	54	2,761	10,363	52	2,616
30 - 34	9,091	44	2,338	8,721	44	2,242
35 - 39	8,555	48	2,137	8,226	48	2,033
40 - 44	9,323	53	2,244	8,946	51	2,132
45 - 49	8,766	49	2,120	8,450	49	2,029
50 - 54	7,296	52	1,767	7,065	51	1,703
55 - 59	5,645	39	1,387	5,504	36	1,349
60 - 64	3,801	29	962	3,742	28	944
65 - 69	2,539	18	612	2,507	18	608
70 - 74	2,032	18	509	2,007	18	500
75 - 79	1,733	16	433	1,721	15	431
80 - 84	1,280	9	369	1,269	8	364
85 - 89	581	9	145	578	9	144
90 - 94	148	0	42	148	0	42
95 +	33	0	9	33	0	9
Unknown	4,764	5	563	4,720	5	556
Total	110,299	578	27,326	68,675*	384*	16,185*



* The totals reflect all accidents in Kansas for 2005, not the sum of the cells above, as multiple counting occurs when drivers of different age groups are involved in the same accident.

Drivers Involved in Accidents by Age



Seat-belt effort clicking in Illinois

The state had fewer than 1,300 deaths on its roads for first time since 1924

By Larry Copeland
USA TODAY

On July 3, 2003, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed a law that allowed police in his state to stop and ticket drivers they saw operating vehicles without wearing seat belts. It was part of an ambitious effort to reduce annual traffic deaths in his state to 1,000 or fewer by 2008.

State officials say that effort made major progress last year, when Illinois recorded its lowest number of traffic deaths in more than 80 years. For the first time since 1924, fewer than 1,300 people were killed on Illinois roads.

Illinois is one of many states mounting aggressive strategies to try to reduce deaths on their streets and highways.

More states are using computer-enhanced analysis to identify crash trends and tailor enforcement and education programs, says Barbara Harsha, executive director of the Governors Highway Safety Association, which advises states on traffic safety.

In Illinois, seat-belt use has been steadily going up since the so-called primary seat-belt law was passed, and highway deaths have been going down.

In 2003, 76% of Illinois motorists wore seat belts and 1,454 people died in traffic; seat-belt use rose to 83% (with 1,355 fatalities) in 2004; 86% (1,363) in 2005 and 88% (1,267) in 2006, according to Michael Stout, director of the Illinois Department of Transportation's traffic safety division.

"We believe the biggest impact has been due to the fact of Gov. Blagojevich signing the primary seat-belt law in 2003," Stout says.

Police in Illinois systematically enforced the seat-belt law last year, Stout says. Police set up thousands of "safety belt enforcement zones," in which one or two officers watched whether motorists were wearing seat belts. "If they're unbuckled, the officers pull them over or radio



By John Cress for USA TODAY

On I-57 near Chicago: Eboni Anderson gets a ticket from Israel Collazo of the Illinois State Police at a seat-belt checkpoint last week.

a car sitting up ahead and have it pull them over," he says. Police issued more than 58,000 citations in May for seat-belt and child safety seat violations, says Matt Vanover, a spokesman for the Illinois Department of Transportation.

States have other ways to reduce road deaths beyond just enforcing seat-belt laws. In fact, the biggest percentage drop in traffic fatalities last year, 23.5%, came in New Hampshire — the

only state without a mandatory seat-belt law for adults.

In Illinois, the state has added a Motorcycle Enforcement Bu-

reau, started using photo radar and launched other enforcement and public information campaigns. Illinois State Police say their efforts to reduce deaths have focused on the "Fatal Five" violations: speeding, not wearing seat belts, improper lane changes, following too closely, and driving under the influence.

Blagojevich, a Democrat, took office in January 2003. He has supported numerous legislative efforts aimed at cutting fatalities. Among them:

► Laws banning drivers under 18 from using cellphones and requiring young drivers to make sure passengers under age 19 are properly buckled.

► Laws that doubled the amount of supervised time young drivers must spend behind the wheel before receiving their full license and that pro-

hibited teen drivers from carrying more than one passenger for the first six months after receiving their license.

► Stiffer penalties for drivers over 21 who drive intoxicated while carrying passengers under age 16; tougher sentences for drivers who cause a death while driving drunk and for driving after a DUI license revocation.

The state's efforts are drawing notice.

In January, the group Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety named Illinois one of four "best performance states" for passing at least two of 15 laws it says are proven to reduce highway deaths injuries.

"Illinois has been very consistent in its passage of key laws," says Judie Stone, president of the safety group.

► 16 states see big drop, 1A



For details on how individual states are trying to reduce traffic deaths, go to usatoday.com

State-by-state totals

States are finalizing traffic death totals for 2006. Some numbers are preliminary and could change; these are the latest figures available. In states marked with asterisks, drivers can be cited for failing to wear a seat belt only if they have been pulled over for a separate violation.

State	2006	2005	Percent change	State	2006	2005	Percent change
Ala.	1,200 ¹	1,134	5.8%	Neb.*	266	276	-3.6%
Alaska	70	73	-4.1%	Nev.*	432	427	1.2%
Ariz.*	1,193	1,179	1.2%	N.H. ⁴	127	166	-23.5%
Ark.*	639	648	-1.4%	N.J.	766	748	2.4%
Calif.	4,200 ¹	4,304	-2.4%	N.M.	483	488	-1%
Colo.*	533	606	-12%	N.Y.	N/A	1,429	N/A
Conn.	325	292	11.3%	N.C.	1,558	1,549	0.6%
Del.	145	133	9%	N.D.*	-111	123	-9.8%
D.C.	43	49	-12.2%	Ohio*	1,238	1,326	-6.6%
Fla.*	3,253	3,533	-7.9%	Okla.	751	801	-6.2%
Ga.	1,637 ³	1,729	-5.3%	Ore.	476	487	-2.3%
Hawaii	162	141	14.9%	Pa.*	N/A	1,616	N/A
Idaho*	N/A	275	N/A	R.I.*	81	85	-4.7%
Ill.	1,267	1,363	-7%	S.C.	1,029	1,093	-5.9%
Ind.	868	938	-7.5%	S.D.*	190	186	2.2%
Iowa	440	450	-2.2%	Tenn.	1,259	1,270	-0.9%
Kan.*	464	428	8.4%	Texas	2,973 ³	3,577	-16.9%
Ky.	906	986	-8.1%	Utah*	285	282	1.1%
La.	862	965	-10.7%	Vt.*	88	74	18.9%
Maine*	187	169	10.7%	Va.*	945	946	-0.1%
Md.	622	614	1.3%	Wash.	608	654	-7%
Mass.*	412	442	-6.8%	W.Va.*	411	374	9.9%
Mich.	847 ²	1,134	N/A	Wis.*	714	801	-10.9%
Minn.*	475	559	-15%	Wyo.*	195	170	14.7%
Miss.	890	931	-4.4%				
Mo.*	1,073	1,257	-14.6%				
Mont.*	263	251	4.8%				

N/A - Not available; 1 - Estimate; 2 - Through Oct. 31; 3 - Georgia and Texas expect final total to exceed 2005 total; 4 - New Hampshire has no mandatory seat belt law for adults. Sources: State transportation, police and public safety departments, highway patrols

Contributing: Alan Gomez and Oren Dorell, USA TODAY; Leon Alligood of *The (Nashville) Tennessean*; Laura Bruno of the Morristown, N.J., *Daily Record*; Sam Hemingway of *The Burlington (Vt.) Free Press*; Matt Reed of *Florida Today* in Melbourne; Tracy Loew of the Salem, Ore., *Statesman Journal*; Mike Leidemann of *The Honolulu Advertiser*; Jessie Halladay of *The (Louisville) Courier-Journal*; Jeff DeLong of the *Reno Gazette-Journal*; Ken Fuson of *The Des Moines Register*; Brian Passey of *The (St. George, Utah) Spectrum*; Stefanie Frith, *The (Palm Springs, Calif.) Desert Sun*; Gwen Florio of the *Great Falls (Mont.) Tribune*; Wes Johnson of the *Springfield (Mo.) News-Leader*; Ben Jones of *The (Appleton, Wis.) Post-Crescent*; Tamara Audi of the *Detroit Free Press*; Ron Barnett of *The Greenville (S.C.) News*; Stu Whitney of the *Sioux Falls, S.D., Argus Leader*; Sharon Coolidge of *The Cincinnati Enquirer*; Mike Linn of the *Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser*; Jennie Coughlin of *The Daily News Leader* in Staunton, Va.; Theodore Kim of *The Indianapolis Star*; Dennis Wagner of *The Arizona Republic* in Phoenix; and Gary Stern of *The Journal News* in Westchester County, N.Y.

16 states see road deaths slashed

Efforts include laws, education

By Larry Copeland, Alan Gomez and Oren Dorell
USA TODAY

Traffic deaths dropped substantially in 16 states last year, in many cases reflecting stepped-up enforcement and education campaigns, according to a USA TODAY analysis of statistics reported by the states.

Highway fatalities fell by at least 5% in those 16 states. In nine other states, deaths rose by at least that much. Texas and Georgia reported preliminary declines of more than 5%, but traffic safety agencies in those states expect the final totals to rise significantly.

While the fatality numbers are preliminary and unofficial, they show startling drops in some states. Safety officials attribute the declines in part to coordinated programs aimed at careless or reckless driving.

"This was the safest year on Ohio roads on record," says Lt. Tony Bradshaw of the Ohio State Highway Patrol. He says 1,238 people died on the state's roads last year, a 6.6% drop from 2005.

Bradshaw attributes the decline to enforcement and education efforts and new research initiatives that enable state troopers to focus on areas where crashes are most likely to occur.

Illinois saw traffic deaths fall below 1,300, the lowest total since 1924. Road deaths there have been dropping every year since 2003, when the state enacted a law that allows police to stop motorists solely for not wearing seat belts.

"These numbers represent clear and convincing evidence to us that the law is working and seat belts really do save lives," Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich says.

State-by-state

■ Traffic deaths in 2006, 3A

Last year, three other states — Alaska, Kentucky and Mississippi — enacted such laws, bringing the number to 25. All three states reported declines in traffic deaths. Officials in Kentucky and Mississippi attributed the drops to the new law.

Among other factors cited in states that had drops in traffic fatalities: stiffer drunken-driving laws, police checkpoints aimed at aggressive driving, improved highway design, and graduated license programs and other safety efforts targeting young drivers.

Several states are still collecting data from county and local law enforcement agencies and say their 2006 fatality figures could rise.

States report their highway death numbers to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which analyzes the figures before issuing a preliminary national fatality total, usually in August. NHTSA releases its official tally in the fall. The 2006 total is not likely to show major changes from 2005. Since 1995, the annual total has ranged between 41,000 and 43,000.

Still to be calculated is each state's traffic fatality rate, which is the number of deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled. The U.S. fatality rate, which had been dropping for more than 10 years, rose to 1.47 in 2005 from 1.45 in 2004, according to NHTSA data.

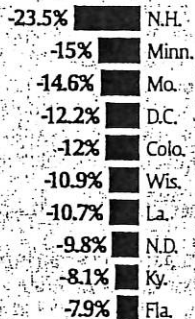
National highway safety experts caution that the preliminary 2006 statistics should not be viewed as evidence of trends. "It's impossible to draw conclusions or see a trend in just one year to the next in state data, because the fluctuations are often very large in any one state's fatality figures," says Anne McCartt, senior vice president for research at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. "Even something as basic as the weather can affect traffic fatalities."

"You have to look at vehicle miles traveled, the cost of gas, whether people were driving as much," says Judie Stone, president of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety. "To give full credit to (enforcement and education efforts) is probably not fair. And I say that as someone who would love to give full credit."

In states where fatalities rose substantially, agencies cited increases in pedestrian deaths, aggressive driving, drunken driving and speeding as factors.

Fewer deaths

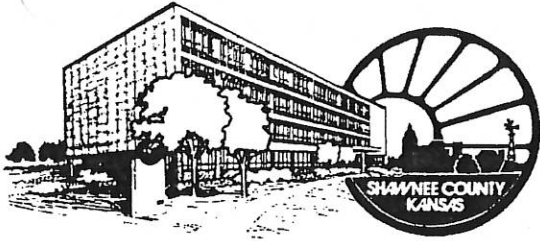
Largest drops in traffic fatalities for 2005-06:



Source: USA TODAY research (some figures are preliminary)

By Julie Snyder, USA TODAY

4-8
4-8



**Shawnee County
Sheriff's Office
Sheriff Richard W. Barta
Law Enforcement Center**

320 South Kansas Ave., Suite 200
Topeka, KS 66603-3641
785-368-2200

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I am Captain Scott Holladay, and on behalf of the Shawnee County Sheriff's Office, I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about Senate Bill 211 and requiring young motorists to buckle up.

There is nothing worse for a deputy than to be called to a fatal wreck that could have been prevented, especially when young Kansans are the victims of senseless crashes. You've heard all the slogans: *Seat Belts Save Lives*, *Click or Ticket*, and many others. They may be cliché, but they're true. The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies across the state actively enforce occupant protection laws, yet Kansas is still below the national average for seat belt use. We must do more, and strengthening our laws is one more tool deputies may use to encourage drivers to buckle up.

The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office supports Senate Bill 211, which requires all occupants 14, 15, 16, and 17 years old to wear seat belts. Furthermore, we also support requiring all occupants of any age to buckle up, no matter where they may be seated in the vehicle. While Senate Bill 211 does not address a primary law for all occupants, it certainly points the State in the right direction by enhancing occupant protection for our state's youth.

Habits developed in our teenage years carry over into adulthood. Think of all the life lessons you learned at a young age that continue to impact your life today. It is our hope that buckling up is a positive habit that teens will embrace. When they reach adulthood, hopefully they will continue to wear their seat belts, and some day they will set that same positive example for their children. Therein lies the key: we must do all we can to ensure they reach adulthood and live full and productive lives. Too many young Kansans have lost their lives or were severely injured in car crashes because they were ejected from the vehicle, and wearing their seat belt could have made the difference of life or death for them. I wish I could stand up here and tell you that our deputies rarely see cases in which seat belts would not have made a difference, but I can't. It truly is tragic to tell a family their loved one died and their death could have been prevented if they had only worn a seat belt.

(Personal supporting story or stories)

As adults, it is our responsibility to set good examples for today's youth. We can do it by wearing our seat belts every time we get in a car and asking all our passengers to do the same. As legislators, you can show teens that you care about them and their well-being by passing Senate Bill 211. The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office supports this bill, and I ask that your committee give it favorable support. At this time, I will stand for any questions you have.

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House Transportation
Date: 3-13-07
Attachment # 5



March 13, 2007

To: House Transportation Committee
From: Cindy D'Ercole
Re: Senate Bill 211

Kansas Action for Children Inc.
720 SW Jackson | Suite 201
Topeka, KS 66603

P 785-232-0550 | F 785-232-0699
kac@kac.org | www.kac.org

Celebrating 25 years
of child advocacy

Kansas Action for Children supports the enactment of SB 211.

Traffic crashes are the number one cause of death for teens and one of the key factors is unbuckled seat belts. Increasing seat belt use is the single most effective and immediate way to save lives and reduce the number of injuries on Kansas roadways.

Teens are at risk: more accidents and lower seat belt use

Teenagers tend to have more accidents because inexperience, immaturity and risk-taking behavior make for a bad combination. Further compounding matters is that teens often drive at night with other teens in the car. Teen drivers are only 6.7 percent of all licensed drivers in Kansas, but they have 20.1 percent of the crashes.

The disproportionate teen driver accident rate is paired with a disproportionately lower seat-belt usage rate. Whether they are driving or not, teens are much less likely to wear belts than adults. In 85 percent of all teen traffic fatalities in Kansas the victim was not wearing a seat belt.

Quite simply, teens are the most likely to be involved in a crash and the least likely to be wearing a seat belt.

Seat belts work

The single greatest defense against highway injuries and fatalities is the seat belt. When used properly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatal injury to front seat vehicle occupants by 45 percent.

Seat belt laws work

Research shows that standard, or primary, seat belt laws are much more effective in increasing safety belt use. In fact, the states that currently have the highest teenage seat belt use have strong standard seat belt laws. Teens are more likely to buckle up because people are more likely to buckle up when there is the perceived risk of receiving a citation.

Many teens also support standard enforcement of safety belt laws. In 2000, a nationwide survey was conducted to determine attitudes regarding standard enforcement of safety belt laws. Of the young people

House Transportation
Date: 3-13-07
Attachment # 6

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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16 to 20 years of age who were surveyed, 60 percent voiced their support for standard enforcement laws.

The Details:

There are two types of safety belt laws: primary and secondary.

A primary (standard) safety belt law allows law enforcement officers to stop a vehicle and issue a citation when the officer simply observes an unbelted driver or passenger.

A secondary safety belt law means that a citation for not wearing a safety belt can only be written after the officer stops the vehicle or cites the offender for another infraction.

In Kansas, children 14 and older are only required to wear seatbelts if they are riding in the front seat. The enforcement is secondary, meaning the driver must be stopped and ticketed for another violation. **There is no law, primary or secondary, that applies to teens in the back seat.**

Kansas Action for Children urges you to support SB 211 to ensure that all children under 18 are wearing their seat belt. It is more than just a saying: seat belts really do save lives.



Teen Seat Belts

A Single Step to Saving Lives

The Tragic Problem: Motor vehicle crashes are leading cause of death among teenagers. In Kansas in 2004, 51 drivers ages 15-18 were killed in accidents and almost 6,000 were injured.

The Simple Solution: Increasing seat belt use is the single most effective and immediate way to save lives and reduce the number of injuries on Kansas roadways. Kansas needs to extend primary enforcement of seat belt usage to include children ages 14 - 18.

Improving the Kansas Law

In Kansas, children 14 and older are only required to wear seatbelts if they are riding in the front seat. The enforcement is secondary, meaning the driver must be stopped and ticketed for a separate violation. There is no law, primary or secondary, that applies to teens in the back seat.

Primary Prevention

- In 85% of teen fatalities in Kansas, the victim was not wearing a seat belt.
- Failure to use seat belts contributes to more fatalities and injuries than any other single traffic-related behavior.
- Research shows that primary safety belt laws are much more effective in increasing safety belt use: states that currently have the highest teenage safety belt use have strong primary safety belt laws.

In Kansas, teens have the highest fatality rate in motor vehicle crashes and the lowest safety belt use rate. It is not just a saying, safety belts do save lives. It is clear that too many young lives in Kansas are being lost each year, and there is a clear and simple solution. All children under 18 should be required to wear seat belts in Kansas.

Fast Facts

Two out of five deaths among U.S. teens are the result of a motor vehicle crash (CDC 2004).

Compared with other age groups, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use. In 2003, 18% of high school students reported they rarely or never wear seat belts when riding with someone else (CDC 2004b).

More than 90 percent of all transportation-related deaths each year result from highway crashes. Data indicates that nearly half of crashes involving children occur within 7 minutes from home (NTSB).

The Human Collision

At the moment of impact, unbelted occupants are still traveling at the vehicle's original speed. Just after the vehicle comes to a complete stop, these unbelted occupants will slam into the steering wheel, the windshield, or some other part of the vehicle interior. This is the human collision.

The human collision also includes person-to-person impact. Many serious injuries are caused by unbelted occupants colliding with each other. People in the front seat are often struck by unbelted rear-seat passengers who have become high-speed projectiles.