

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Virgil Peck at 1:30 P.M. on March 14, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Jerry Henry- excused
Representative Tom Sloan- excused
Representative Mark Treaster- excused

Committee staff present:

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

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director of Health, Dept. of Health & Environment
Deb Miller, Secretary of Kansas Dept. of Transportation
Col. William Seck, Superintendent of Kansas Highway Patrol
Jim Hanni, representing AAA Allied Group
Ed Klump, representing Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police
Angie Nordhus, State Child Death Review Board
Cindy Conner, Citizen, Kansas City area
Deb Ward, Citizen, Kansas City area

Others attending:

See attached list.

The meeting was opened by Vice-Chairman Peck who chaired the meeting until Chairman Hayzlett arrived. Vice-Chair Peck opened the hearing on **SB 294**.

SB 294 - Drivers licenses, age requirements

Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director of Health, Department of Health and Environment was the first proponent for **SB 294**. (Attachment #1) According to Dr. Rodenberg, unintentional injuries kill more young Kansans than any other cause and motor vehicle crashes result in nearly half of these deaths. He said according to the Kansas Department of Transportation, drivers ages 14 through 19 were involved in 17,978 crashes in 2004 for an estimated cost of \$653,832,300. Dr. Rodenberg said the effectiveness of Graduated driver licensing laws as a prevention strategy has been widely demonstrated. That the states who have responded to the national priority of protecting young drivers by raising their minimum driving ages and implementing GDL are experiencing the pay off. He concluded by saying that it is time for Kansas to act on the evidence base that calls for graduated drivers licensing.

The next proponent was Colonel William Seck, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol. (Attachment #2) According to Col. Seck, graduated driver's license programs, have proven to help teens gain maturity and experience behind the wheel, which assist in reducing the high crash rates for drivers in their age group. He said teens rank highest in crashes attributed to speeding, aggressive and reckless driving, and distractions. All these factors could be minimized with education, experience and maturity according to Col. Seck. He concluded by saying the Highway Patrol supports **SB 294** and asked the Committee to favorably pass this bill.

Jim Hanni was the next proponent to testify before the Committee. (Attachment #3) According to Mr. Hanni, AAA supports changes to the current licensing system in **SB 294**. He said because so many other states have enacted true GDL systems, there is plenty of evidence that GDL, as proposed, clearly works to reduce novice driver car crashes significantly. Mr. Hanni said in addition to parent and teen attitudes of approval there is a wide public support for improving our GDL system. He said these changes will strongly benefit both rural and urban parents and teens, however, experience indicates greater reductions in crashes, particularly serious injury and fatal ones, will occur for rural than for urban families.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Transportation Committee at 1:30 P.M. on March 14, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

The next proponent was Deb Miller, Secretary, Department of Transportation. (Attachment #4) Secretary Miller reminded the Committee that this legislation was one of the recommendations from the Driving Force task force. She also advised the Committee that in response to concerns about the 9:00 p.m. driving restriction, this bill was amended by the Senate Committee of the Whole to allow those with a restricted license to drive to and from school and religious activities. According to Secretary Miller, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 16 - 20 year olds with two of the riskiest situations for young drivers being nighttime driving and driving with other teenage passengers - which **SB 294** addresses. She also said Kansas is one of only five states without nighttime or passenger restrictions.

Ed Klumpp, representing the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police was the next proponent to testify on **SB 294**. (Attachment #5) Mr. Klumpp said law enforcement agencies recognize this legislation may pose some challenges in enforcing the GDL rules. However, he said, enforcing the provisions of this bill cannot be half as difficult as telling a parent their child was severely injured or killed in a vehicle crash. He said this bill has been crafted to address the needs of urban and rural Kansas that it has the components to minimize peer pressure to engage in dangerous driving behavior.

The Chairman recognized Angela Nordhus, Executive Director, State Child Death Review Board. (Attachment #6) According to Ms. Nordhus, Kansas has lost a total of 807 children under the age of 17 from 1994 through 2004. She said almost all of the motor vehicle deaths involved risk factors, such as inexperience or inattentive driving, lack of safety restraints, and excessive speed. Ms. Nordhus concluded by saying they believe graduated driver licensing systems are compelling and such a system in Kansas will save lives.

The last proponent was Cindy Conner, whose teenage son was killed in a motor vehicle accident while on his way to school. (Attachment #7) He was a passenger in a car driven by one of his school friends. He was not wearing his safety belt and the driver of the car was speeding and driving recklessly. She concluded by saying that "driving restrictions may not be convenient for parents...but they are much less of a burden than planning a funeral."

The Chairman asked if there were any other proponents - there were none. The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the written testimony submitted in support of **SB 294** from Cindy D'Ercole, KS Action for Children; Terry Holdren, Kansas Farm Bureau; Jan Stegelman, Safe Kids Kansas; and the Kansas State Nurses Association.

There being no other proponents the Chairman called for opponents to **SB 294**.

The only opponent to testify on this bill was Debbie Ward, a resident of Johnson County. (Attachment #8) According to Ms. Ward, strict enforcement of a proposed safety belt law for 14-17 year olds will dramatically reduce teen fatalities. She said strict enforcement of the safety belt bill combined with a strong no cell phone usage law would solve the problems. She quoted the Director of the Highway Safety for the Missouri Department of Transportation as saying part of the problem has been enforcing the section of the law that allows police to pull over teens for not wearing their safety belts. Ms. Ward said total elimination of the teen driving laws currently in place is too drastic and tells our children that we do not think they are responsible to be driving at 16. Ms. Ward concluded by saying the Committee should remember the 99% of the teens in Kansas who are responsible and not the small minority of teen drivers who are not.

There being no other opponents to this bill present, the Chairman drew the Committee's attention to a letter submitted by Timothy M. O'Brien, attorney, Overland Park, KS in opposition to this bill.

After all questions were answered the Chairman closed the hearing on **SB 294**.

It was the Chairman's desire to work **HB 2071**. An amendment was proposed to remove Section 7 of the bill which would have designated K-53 Highway as the Patriot Guard Highway. This amendment would also clean up some antiquated language in the bill regarding road openings between March 1 and October 1. The Chairman called for questions, motions or comments. Representative Vickrey made a motion to amend HB 2071, seconded by Representative George and the motion carried. Back on the bill, Representative Vickrey

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Transportation Committee at 1:30 P.M. on March 14, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

then made a motion to favorably pass **HB 2071**, as amended. The motion was seconded by Representative Huntington and the motion carried.

The Chairman advised the Committee he wanted to work **SB 211**. The Committee was briefed on **SB 211**, as amended by the Senate. Chairman Hayzlett called for questions, motions, or comments on this bill. Representative Swanson made a motion to add the definition of 'passenger car', seconded by Representative Sharp and the motion carried. Back on the bill, Representative Menghini made a motion to amend page 2, section 2 to say the fine would be \$60 plus court courts, seconded by Representative Swanson and the motion carried. Back on the bill, Representative Huntington made a motion to prohibit electronic devices through the age of 17, seconded by Representative Menghini, the motion failed. Back on the bill, Representative Vickrey made a motion to favorably pass, seconded by Representative Swanson and the motion carried to favorably pass **SB 211**, as amended.

There being no further business before the Committee the Chairman adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be on March 15, 2007, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 519-S.

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE 3-14-07

NAME	REPRESENTING
LORI HASKETT	KOTHE
Ken Gulenkant	KDOT
ROBYN HORTON	KS MOTOR CARRIERS ASSN.
Travis Cox	Citizen
Jessyka Flax	Citizen
Autumn Loomis	Citizen
Tom Whitaker	KMACA
Cj D'Ercole	KAC
Debbie Ward	citizen/voter
Terry Mitchell	KDOT
Chemen Alveste	KDOT

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE 3-14-07

NAME	REPRESENTING
Jim Hanni	AAA
Angie Madhus	State Child Death Review Bd
Mary Kennedy	"
Pete Bodyk	KDOT
Dan Murray	Federico Consult / T-Mobile



Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

Division of Health

Testimony on SB 294

To

House Committee on Transportation

By Howard Rodenberg, MD, MPH
Director, Division of Health

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

March 14, 2007

Chairman Hayzlett and members of the Committee on Transportation, my name is Howard Rodenberg and I am the director of the Division of Health at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of Senate Bill 294, which proposes to strengthen graduated drivers licensing laws (GDL) in Kansas.

Unintentional injuries kill more young Kansans than any other cause, and motor vehicle crashes result in nearly half of these deaths. In 2002, more than 5,000 teens ages 16 to 19 died of injuries caused by motor vehicle crashes nationally (CDC 2004). Crash rates among young drivers age 16 –19, per mile driven, are higher than those for all other age groups and the crash risk among 16 to 17 year old drivers is almost three times as high as among 18 to 19 year olds drivers. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety)

Kansas statistics show a similar pattern. While teen drivers ages 15 – 18 account for only 6.7% of all Kansas registered drivers, they represent 20.1% of all crashes. Fifty -one Kansas kids died and 5,993 more were injured as a result of car crashes in our state in 2004 (Kansas Department of Transportation, 2004). According to the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) drivers ages 14 through 19 were involved in 17,978 crashes in 2004 for an estimated cost of \$653,832,300.

Graduated Driver licensing programs have become an increasingly popular approach to managing the serious problem of high rates of fatal and nonfatal crashes among beginning drivers. These programs vary from state to state, but most are designed to provide novice drivers the opportunity to gain driving experience in less risky circumstances, typically implementing a combination of provisions such as those described in the Johns Hopkins study cited below. Forty one states and the District of Columbia have already instituted some form of GDL that includes two phases prior to full licensure.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
CURTIS STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 1000 SW JACKSON ST., STE. 300, TOPEKA, KS 66612-1368

Voice 785-296-1086 Fax 785-296-1562

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 1

The effectiveness of Graduated driver licensing laws as a prevention strategy has been widely demonstrated. According to a study conducted by researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, graduated driver licensing programs reduce incidence of fatal crashes of 16 year old drivers by an average of 11 percent. Using data from 1994-2004 collected by NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the US Census Bureau the study group examined fatality outcomes with the number of components contained in the respective graduated drivers license law. Seven components commonly found in graduated license laws were chosen for analysis and these included: 1) a minimum age of 15 ½ for obtaining a learner permit; 2) a waiting period after obtaining a learner permit of at least 3 months before applying for an intermediate license; 3) a minimum of 30 hours of supervised driving; 4) minimum age of at least 16 years for obtaining an intermediate state license; 5) minimum age of at least 17 years for full licensing; 6) a nighttime driving restriction; 7) a restriction on carrying passengers. Comparing states with five of these program components to states without graduated driver licensing programs, the researchers reported an 18 percent difference in fatal crashes involving 16 year old drivers. Programs with six or seven components were associated with a 21 percent reduction. The authors concluded that the most comprehensive graduated driver licensing programs result in the best reduction of fatal crashes of 16 year old drivers.

The states who have responded to the national priority of protecting young drivers by raising their minimum driving ages and implementing GDL are experiencing the pay off. For example, after North Carolina adopted a three-phase licensing system, which included nighttime restrictions, the number of 16 year olds involved in motor vehicle crashes dropped 23 percent. The number of fatal collisions was cut in half. Similarly, during the first three years after California enacted legislation restricting those younger than 18 from driving with passengers younger than 20, an estimated eight lives were saved and almost 700 injuries prevented in averted crashes.

The national 2005 crash statistics indicate that headway is being made in reducing crash deaths, thanks in large measure to the success of graduated licensing, which phases in full driving privileges among beginners. Deaths of 16 and 17 year-olds in passenger vehicles fell 8 percent in 2005, to 1,631 from 1,773 the year before. Among 13-19 year-olds, deaths fell 6 percent and have declined about 40 percent since 1975. The death rate per population of teens is the lowest on record. Still, we have a long way to go. In 2005 teens accounted for 12 percent of motor vehicle deaths and only 10 percent of the US population. Fatal crashes involving young drivers typically involve a single vehicle plus driver error and/or speeding. The crashes often occur when other young people are in vehicles driven by teens, so teenagers are disproportionately involved as passengers as well as drivers. Of the 4,440 teenagers killed in passenger vehicle crashes last year, 45 percent were passengers. Sixty-one percent of these deaths occurred in crashes in which another teenager was driving. (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety November 21, 2006)

It is time for Kansas to act on the evidence base that calls for graduated drivers licensing. Enacting a Graduated Drivers License bill will save lives and reduce injuries to Kansas teens. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this information to the committee. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.



K A N S A S

WILLIAM R. SECK, SUPERINTENDENT

KANSAS HIGHWAY PATROL

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

Kansas Highway Patrol Summary of Testimony

Senate Bill 294

House Transportation Committee

March 14, 2007

The Kansas Highway Patrol appreciates the opportunity to present written testimony to your committee in support of Senate Bill 294.

The Patrol is dedicated to promoting traffic safety and reducing injuries and fatalities from motor vehicle crashes. Our experience, as a law enforcement agency, shows that education and experience are key elements in developing safe driving habits, especially among teen drivers. We recognize that experience and maturity are two significant factors in a large number of crashes involving young drivers. Patrol troopers see the horrors of what happens when teens try to "show off" for their friends or when their peers distract their attention from driving. Teens also lack practical knowledge of driving, particularly in adverse weather conditions, such as heavy rain, dense fog, snow, and ice.

Graduated Driver's License programs, also known as GDL, are proven to help teens gain maturity and experience behind the wheel, which assist in reducing the high crash rates for drivers in their age group. Although teens make up a small percentage of licensed drivers, they are over-represented in injury and fatality crashes. Teens rank highest in crashes attributed to speeding, aggressive and reckless driving, and distractions. All these factors could be minimized with education, experience, and maturity. The provisions set forth in Senate Bill 294 tackle issues proven to reduce teen crash rates, such as restricting use of electronic devices, number of passengers, and nighttime driving.

The Patrol recognizes challenges that may exist when considering a bill, such as SB 294, that would bring about a dramatic change in the way of life for young Kansans. The Highway Patrol supports SB 294, and we ask that your committee give this bill favorable support.

###

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 2



TESTIMONY, SB 294

Presented by James R. Hanni,

Executive Vice President, Kansas Region & Public Affairs, AAA Allied Group

March 13, 2006

House Transportation Committee

AAA supports changes to the current licensing system in SB 294, recommended by the work of a citizen's task force, the Driving Force. The changes proposed are only those proven to better protect teens and will dramatically reduce car crashes of novice drivers in Kansas. There is no other single action the Kansas legislature can take that will assuredly reduce motor vehicle crashes, injuries and death **significantly**, than by adopting SB 294.

We support the changes because the proposed system is proven to work as seen in many other states that have adopted similar features. Parents and teens in most other states are participating in similar systems now.

Finally, we support the changes because we know both parents and teens, both urban and rural, that have gone through a licensing system such as this approve of it.

Key Changes for effective reduction of car crashes:

- ◆ Preserve the Farm Permit. Research shows work-related crashes are minimal.
- ◆ One Year (Level I) Instruction Permit with adult supervision, as early as age 15. It gives teen experience that is proven to help reduce car crashes.
- ◆ An intermediate, "Restricted Driver's License" (Level II) stage. As early as age 16. Novice driver may drive without adult supervision, EXCEPT for just a few months longer, six to be exact, must continue adult supervised driving at night and with no more than one non-sibling passenger under age 21.
- ◆ Unrestricted license (Level III) as early as age 16 ½.
- ◆ Novice driver may advance to each level with no moving violations or seat belt infractions.
- ◆ No use of wireless devices while driving.

Basis of Our Support:

- ◆ No other cause of death occurs more often for teens than motor vehicle crashes. Teens are overwhelmingly over-represented in both total and fatal crashes. The recurring number of injuries and death each year make novice driver crashes a Kansas public health epidemic (**Chart A shows driver risk by age**).

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 3

- ◆ 45 out of 50 states have an intermediate stage of licensing in their graduated driver license system. Technically, without the intermediate stage, we lack a true *graduated* license system (GDL) (**See Chart B**).
- ◆ Of the 56,657 drivers age 14-17 involved in motor vehicle crashes from 2001-2005 in Kansas, 67% were in urban areas, while 33% were in rural areas. Conversely, 82% of 14-17 year-old drivers in **fatal** crashes were in rural areas, according to KDOT.
- ◆ Teen car crashes affect all road users, not simply the teens involved. According to a 2006 AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study, in Kansas, nearly six out of ten persons killed in a 15-17 year old driver crash are someone other than the 15-17 year-old driver.
- ◆ It addresses the need for gaining experience behind the wheel with adult supervision, and has dramatically reduced teen crashes in many other states.
- ◆ It protects novice drivers from their greatest exposure to car crash risk: driving at night and with other teen passengers (**Chart C-Passenger Risk**). As proposed, these protections in the intermediate stage of licensing will result in a substantial reduction in car crashes for 16 year-old drivers, as is *proven* in other states (**N.Carolina Chart D-Nighttime crash reductions**).
- ◆ Parents and teens see a GDL system, like the one proposed, as reasonable and they strongly endorse it. There are no differences in approval between urban and rural, parents or teens (**See Charts E & F**).

Conclusion

Because so many other states have enacted true GDL systems, there is plenty of evidence that GDL as proposed clearly works to reduce novice driver car crashes significantly. GDL Systems, like what is proposed for Kansas, produce 20-25% reductions in daytime crashes and 47-52% reductions in nighttime crashes.

In addition to parent and teen attitudes of approval and there is wide public support for improving our GDL system. Many organizations besides AAA, including Kansas Farm Bureau, support this bill. These changes will strongly benefit both rural and urban parents and teens, however, experience indicates greater reductions in crashes, particularly serious injury and fatal ones, will occur for rural than for urban families.

There are few votes that can do more for the families of Kansas than an affirmative vote on this bill. On behalf of the safety of the families of the nearly quarter million AAA members we represent in Kansas, I urge you to vote SB294 favorably out for consideration by the Kansas House of Representatives.

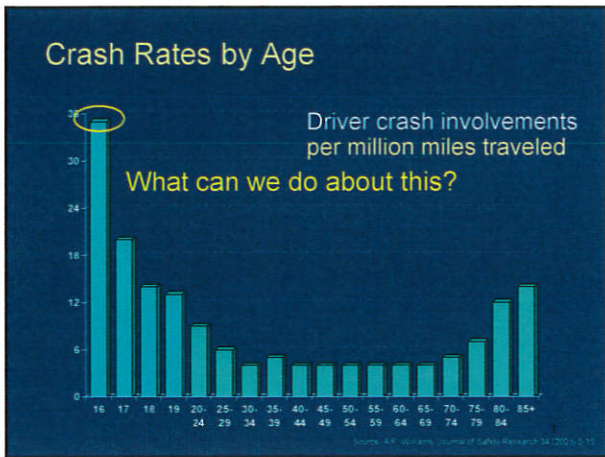


Chart A

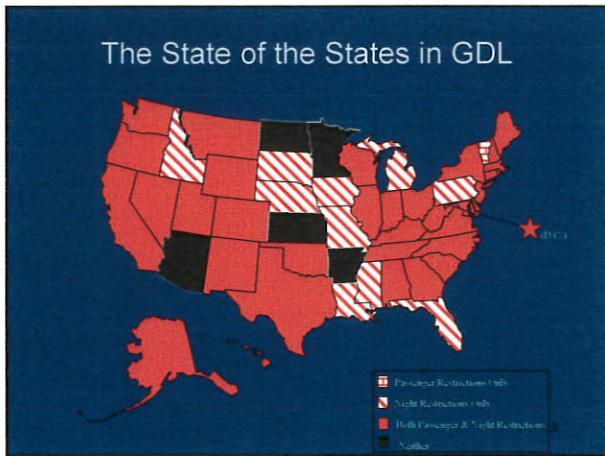


Chart B

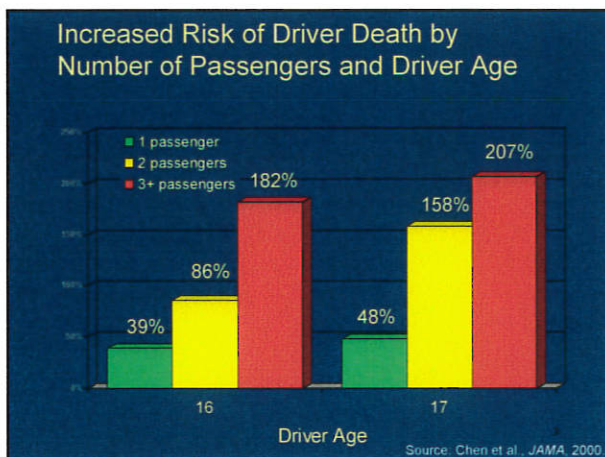


Chart C

Crash Rate Ratios for 16 & 17 year-olds vs. 25-54 year-old, NC 1991-2003

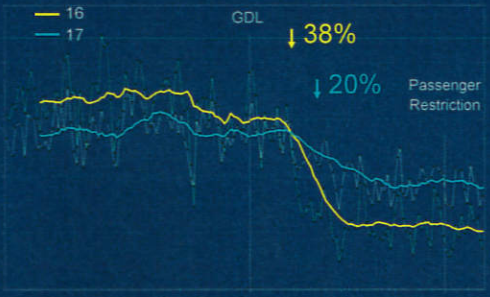


Chart D

Parents' overall opinion of GDL by residence NC 1999

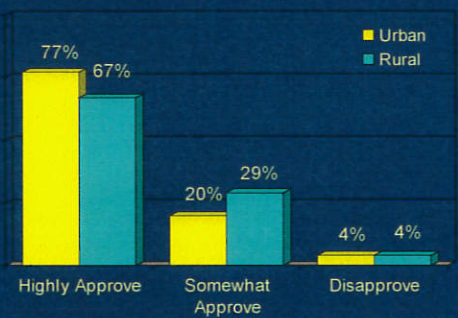


Chart E

Teens' overall opinions of GDL by residence NC 1999

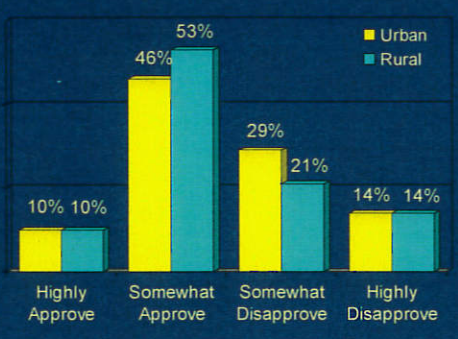


Chart F



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Deb Miller, Secretary

<http://www.ksdot.org>

**TESTIMONY BEFORE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**REGARDING SENATE BILL 294
Graduated Drivers License**

March 14, 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 294, an act relating to age requirements and limitations on driver's licenses. This legislation was one of the many recommendations from the *Driving Force*, a task force studying ways to reduce fatalities and injuries on Kansas roadways. According to research data provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) is a countermeasure with proven effectiveness in reducing novice driver crashes. In response to concerns about the 9PM driving restriction, this bill was amended by the Senate Committee of the Whole to allow those with a restricted license to drive to and from school and religious activities.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and serious injury for teenagers in Kansas as well as the United States. Nationally, motor vehicle crashes represent 39 percent of deaths for people between the ages of 16 and 20. In 2005, Kansas drivers aged 14 through 19 were involved in more than 16,000 crashes on Kansas roadways; wherein 80 teens were killed and more than 7,000 were injured. Although they make up only seven percent of licensed drivers, young drivers are over-represented in crashes. They are involved in 13 percent of fatal crashes and 20 percent of all crashes.

Two of the riskiest situations for young drivers to encounter are nighttime driving and driving with other teenage passengers in the vehicle. The most effective GDL systems restrict nighttime driving as well as limit the number of other teenage passengers in the vehicle. Statistics clearly illustrate that Kansas' current licensing system is not effective in reducing teen crashes; does not provide enough supervised driving experience for young drivers; nor does it protect them from some of the riskiest driving situations. In order to best prepare our young citizens for a lifetime of safe driving, our licensing system must be changed to afford increased learning experiences in less risky situations.

NHTSA released a report in June 2006 evaluating GDL systems across the United States. The report showed an 11 to 32 percent reduction in fatal crashes involving novice drivers after enactment of an effective GDL system. It is also important to note that funding for driver education must continue. Driver education courses provide a base of knowledge to young drivers that can be built upon as they progress through the GDL system.

Thank you for your time, I will gladly stand for questions.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
Dwight D. Eisenhower State Office Building

700 S.W. Harrison Street; Topeka, KS 66603-3745 • (785) 296-3461 • Fax: (785) 296-1095

TTY (Hearing Impaired): (785) 296-3585 • e-mail: publicinfo@ksdot.org • Public Access at North Entrance of Building

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 4

Materials Supporting Senate Bill 294 - Graduated Driver's License System

Letters of Support

- Secretary Deb Miller, Secretary Roderick Bremby, and Col. William Seck
- Darlene Whitlock, co-chair, *Driving Force* task force
- Testimony from Kansas Farm Bureau

Graduated Driver's License Comparison Chart

- Chart comparing Kansas' current licensing system to changes proposed in Senate Bill 294

Driving Force Report on Novice Drivers

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for ages 16-20
- Kansas teen are over-represented in crashes:
 - Teens are 7 % of licensed drivers, are involved in 13 % of fatal crashes, and are involved in 20 % of all crashes
- Driving at night or with multiple teen passengers are the two riskiest situations for novice drivers.
- Kansas is one of only five states without nighttime or passenger restrictions.

Supportive Editorials & other articles, including:

Garden City Telegram

February 17, 2007

"Teens here and elsewhere in Kansas deserve the same consideration and attention as their peers in other states."

Lawmakers have an opportunity to prove that with legislation to toughen the state's teen driver's license laws.

Kansans should demand as much."

Hutchinson News

February 14, 2007

"The bill before the Kansas Legislature is long overdue and offers sensible measures to help teens become better and safer drivers.

Kansas' time has come. The state's teens deserve more than just a few hours driving time before they're handed a license at age 16 with no restrictions.

If we care enough, we'll insist that the Legislature pass this bill."

Parsons Sun

January 17, 2007

"Everyone needs to understand that approving these changes isn't about withdrawing privileges from teens; it's about improving safety on the road for those teens and all other drivers.

It's time that legislators buck up and do what is right. Kansas is woefully behind the times on this issue, and the sooner that changes, the better – for the sake of everyone."

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
REFERENCE SB 294
Presented by Ed Klumpp
On behalf of the
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police

March 14, 2007

Chairman Hayzlett and committee members,

This testimony is in support of SB 294 providing for a graduated driver's license. It establishes a methodical approach to assuring our young driver's receive the training and guidance they need to be safe drivers. The graduated driver's licensing process has been proven to be effective in other states resulting in reduced accidents, injuries and fatalities of our youth. Some data suggests it even reduces these traumatic events in drivers into their early 20s.

Law enforcement knows all too well how often these events occur. Too many times we have to tell parents their children are seriously injured in accidents that result from inexperience and the lack of a systematic approach to expanding the driving privilege gradually as more supervised and limited experience is gained.

Law enforcement agencies recognize this legislation may pose some challenges in enforcing the GDL rules. Most worthwhile law enforcement endeavors addressing traffic safety issues do present challenges. However, enforcing the provisions of this bill cannot be half as difficult as telling a parent their child was severely injured or killed in a vehicle crash.

This bill has been well crafted to address the needs of urban and rural Kansas. It has the components to minimize peer pressure to engage in dangerous driving behavior. It contains reasonable sanctions for those that don't heed the safety requirements it contains.

We ask you to give us the tools we need to save more teens from being killed or disabled and from killing or disabling others on Kansas roadways. We ask you to give parents the tools they need to assure their child has the training and oversight needed to develop positive driving habits.

We urge you to recommend SB 294 favorably for passage.



Ed Klumpp
Chief of Police-Retired
Topeka Police Department

Legislative Committee Chair
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police
E-mail: eklumpp@cox.net; Phone: (785) 235-5619; Cell: (785) 640-1102

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 5

KANSAS STATE CHILD DEATH REVIEW BOARD TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 294

March 14, 2007

Angela Nordhus
Executive Director
State Child Death Review Board

Young teenagers account for the greatest number of motor vehicle crash (MVC) deaths. They are often the driver or a passenger riding with other teen drivers. The State Child Death Review Board (SCDRB) supports SB 294, a graduated driver's license law, which prohibits driving until age 16, and puts specific restrictions on the driver for the next two years.

MVC incidents take the lives of many Kansas children every year. Kansas has lost a total of 807 children under the age of 17 from 1994 through 2004. Almost all of the motor vehicle deaths involved risk factors, such as inexperience or inattentive driving, lack of safety restraints, and excessive speed. One misconception is that there are many MVC deaths involving teens who were under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Approximately 11% of the MVC cases reviewed by the Board involve alcohol/drug use. The majority of cases reviewed involve passengers being ejected from the vehicle and drivers who are inexperienced.

Above all other areas, motor vehicle deaths are consistently shown to be preventable. A significant portion of MVC preventability comes with the proper use of safety restraints and suitable driving skills, which can be achieved through the passage of SB 294. Graduated licensing laws allow adolescents to become more proficient and experienced in their driving before having full driving privileges. The U.S. Department of Transportation lists 38 states that have instituted a graduated licensing system. Kansas is not among them. Currently, at age 16, one may simply take a test to acquire a driving license if an affidavit is provided showing at least 50 hours of adult supervised driving. One test does not compare to the amount of education received in a driver's education course. A standardized course with state-certified instructors, documented driving time, and a graduated licensing system, would greatly reduce the risk of motor vehicle crashes.

In 2004, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated total (adult and child) seatbelt use in Kansas at 68%, which ranked Kansas as 43rd in the nation for seatbelt use. Since its inception, the SCDRB has consistently found a lack of safety restraint use to be the cause of the majority of vehicular deaths, but specifically with 15 through 17-year-olds. The passage of legislation requiring use of safety restraints would greatly lower the number of MVC deaths. In addition, the proposed increase in fines for violators of the safety restraint law is encouraged.

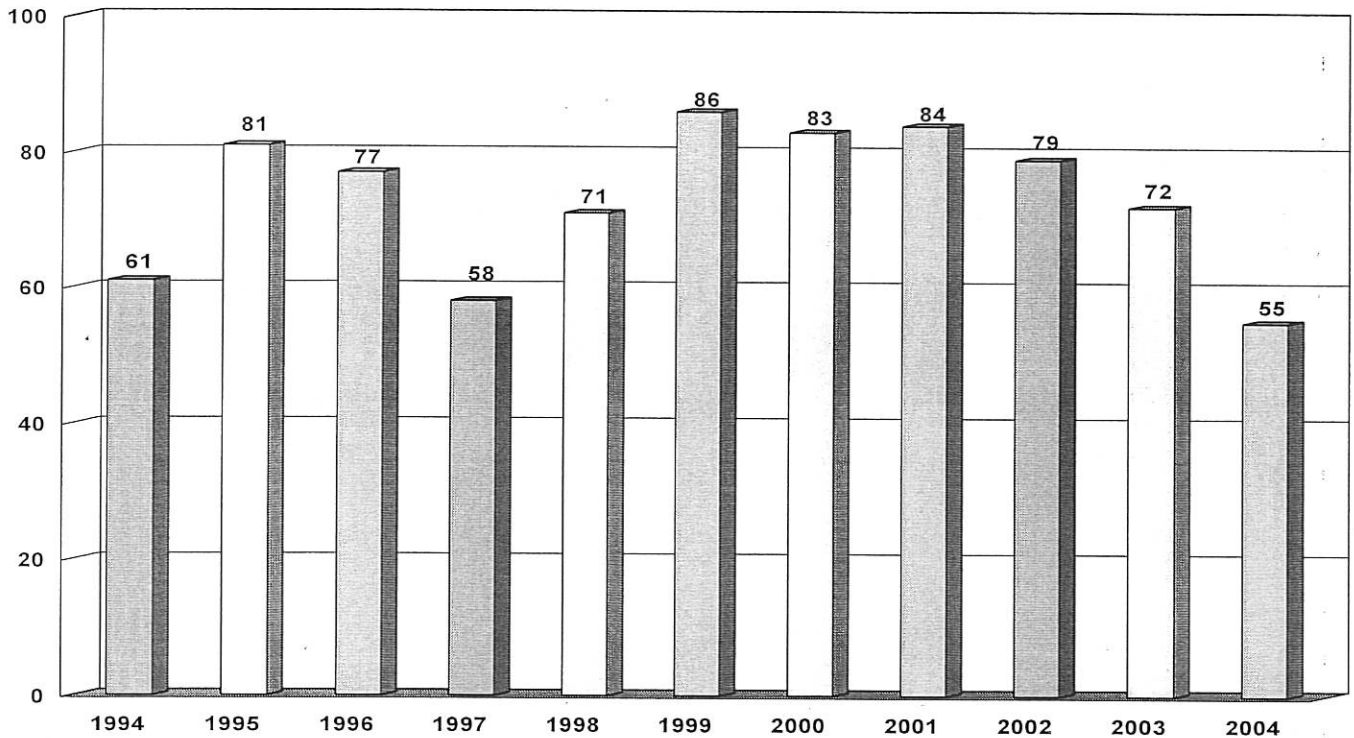
The SCDRB believes graduated driver licensing systems are compelling, and such a system in Kansas will save lives. We thank you for your service and encourage the passage of SB 294.



House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 6

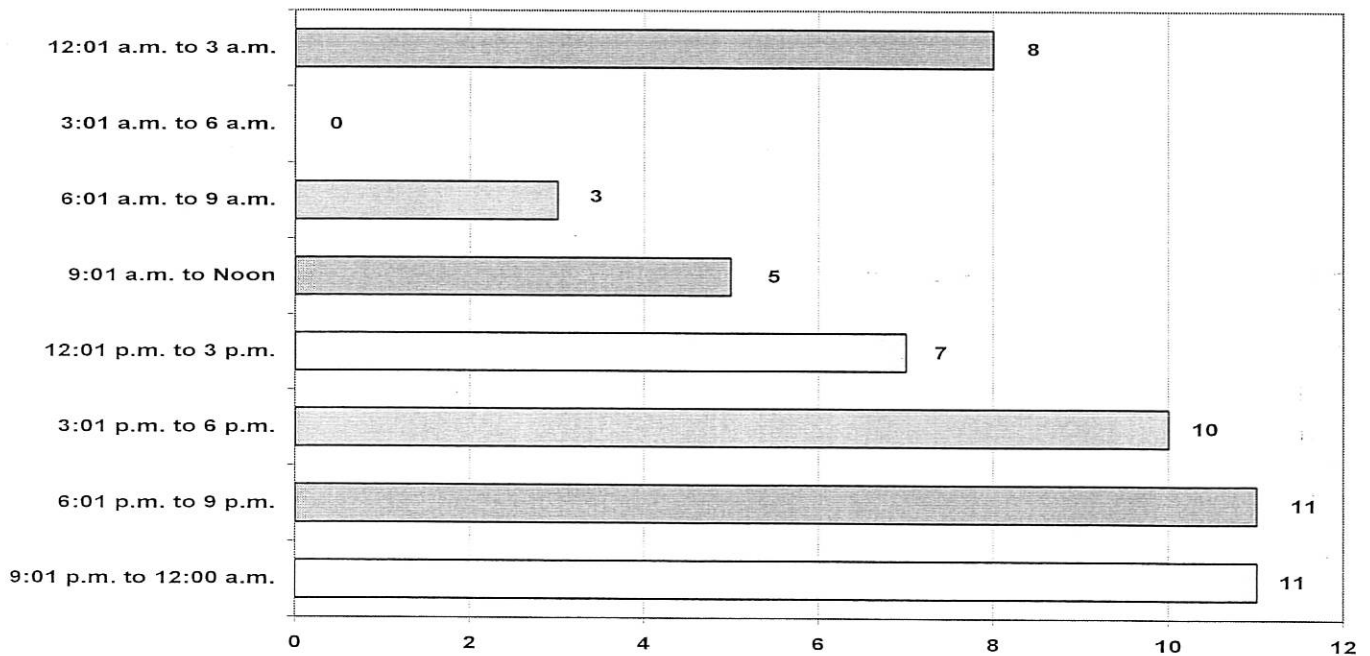
The following charts depict MVC deaths of Kansas children.

Total number of MVC deaths by year, N=807:

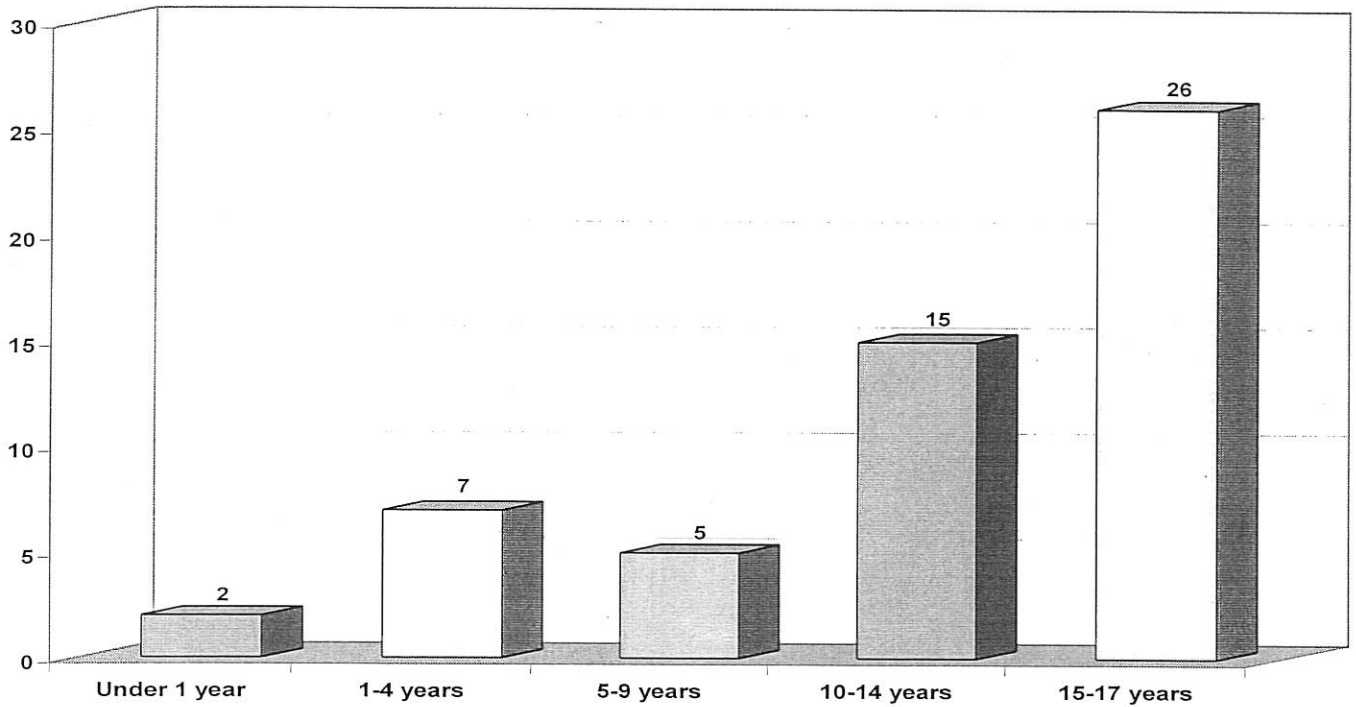


Historically, and 2004 was no exception, the majority of the MVC deaths have occurred between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and Midnight. This is prime time for MVC's as teens are traveling to and from school, school activities, and work.

Number of MVC deaths by time in 2004, N= 55:

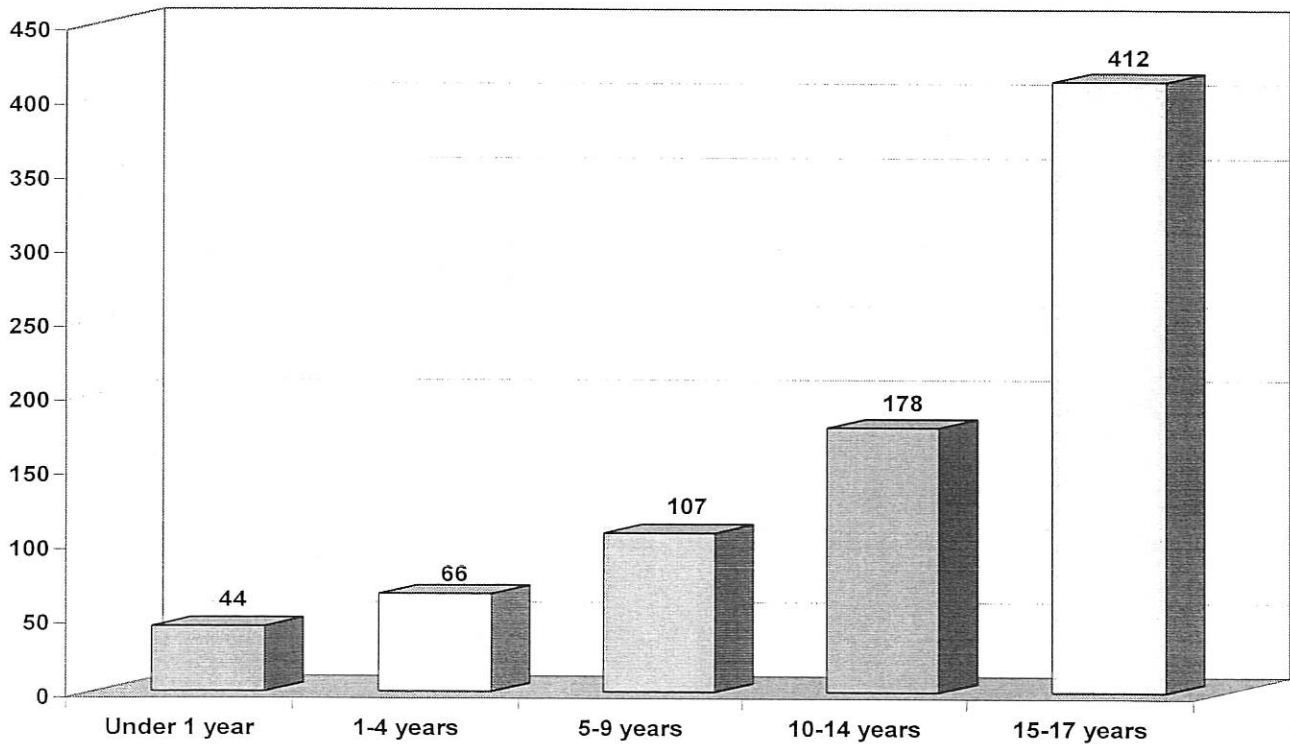


Number of deaths by age group in 2004, N= 55:



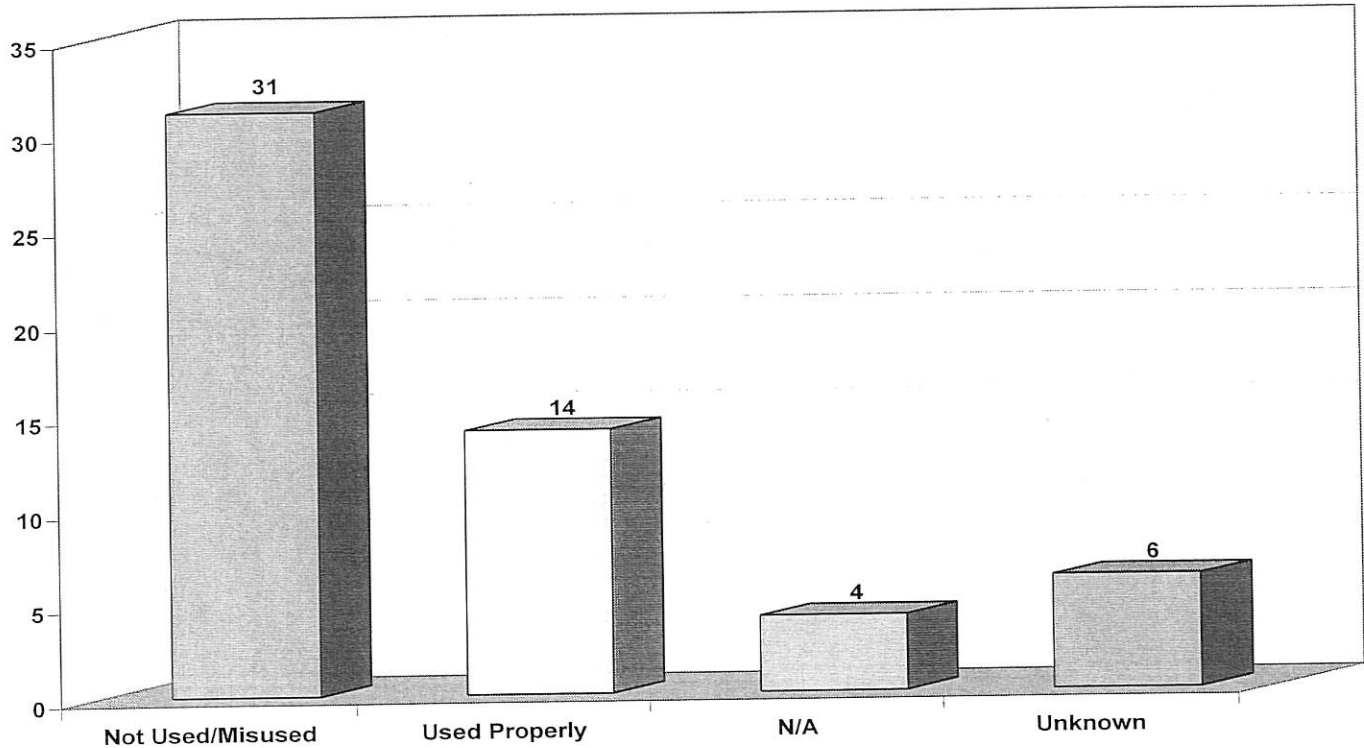
Note the pattern of the 15 to 17-year-old age group making up the majority of MVC deaths over the past 10 years.

Number of deaths by age group from 1994 to 2004, N= 807:

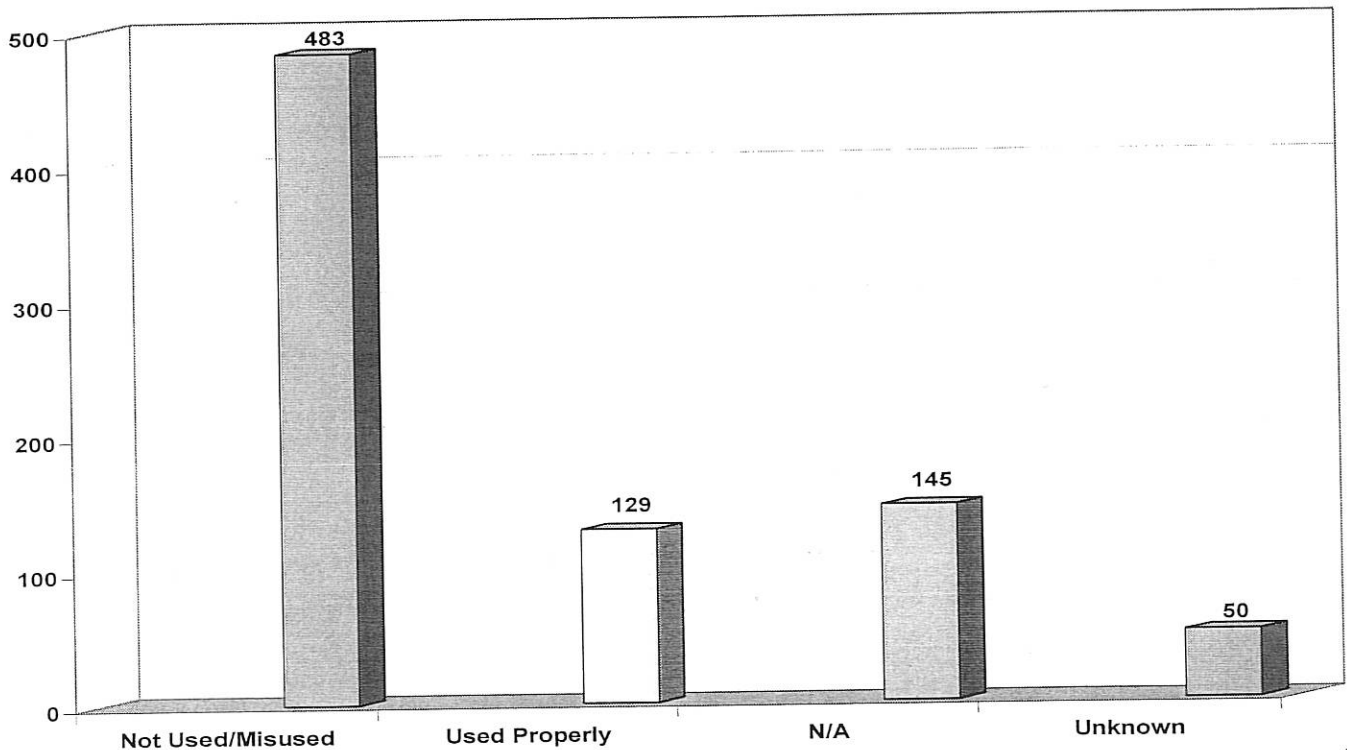


The following two charts show the use of safety restraints. Notice the "Not Used / Misused" category prevails.

Number of deaths by restraint use in 2004, N= 55:



Number of deaths by restraint use from 1994 to 2004, N= 807:



ON FEBRUARY 21, 2003 I LIVED EVERY PARENTS NIGHTMARE WHEN MY 16 YEAR OLD SON CODY BECAME ONE OF THESE STATISTICS.

IT WAS A LITTLE BEFORE 7 A.M. WHEN A CLASSMATE CAME TO PICK CODY UP FOR SCHOOL. I HAD MET THIS KID BRIEFLY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, BUT HAD NOT SEEN HIM AGAIN UNTIL HE STARTED GIVING CODY A RIDE TO SCHOOL 2 ½ WEEKS PRIOR TO CODY'S DEATH. ONCE CODY STARTED RIDING WITH HIM, HE SPENT A LOT OF TIME AT MY HOUSE DOING HOME WORK, PLAYING BASKETBALL AND JUST HANGING OUT. NOT ONCE IN THIS TIME PERIOD DID HE EVER SPEED UP THE ROAD IN HIS CAR, REV UP THE ENGINE OR PEEL OUT. SINCE I NEVER WITNESSED ANY OF THIS TYPE OF DRIVING FROM HIM I DIDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT LETTING CODY RIDE WITH HIM TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

THAT MORNING I LEFT SHORTLY AFTER MY SON TO TAKE MY DAUGHTER TO SCHOOL. UPON LEAVING THE HOUSE MY DAUGHTER AND I HEARD ON THE RADIO THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN ACCIDENT AT 57TH AND KAW DRIVE. I LOOKED AT MY DAUGHTER AND SAID "I HOPE THAT ISN'T CODY AND TYLER", SHE SAID "ME TOO." AFTER DROPPING HER OFF I TOOK I-70 TO WORK AND AS I APPROACHED THE 57TH STREET EXIT THE TRAFFIC ON THE HIGHWAY STARTED TO GET BACKED UP SO I GOT OFF THE HIGHWAY AT 57TH STREET AND THEN REALIZED I COULDN'T GO ANYWHERE SO I GOT BACK ON THE HIGHWAY. UPON MERGING I COULD SEE THE ACCIDENT ON THE FRONTAGE ROAD BELOW THE HIGHWAY AND I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF A BLUE CAR IN THE TREES. THE CAR MY SON WAS RIDING IN WAS BLUE. I HAD A GUT FEELING THAT THIS WAS THE CAR MY SON WAS RIDING IN. I REMEMBER HITTING THE STEERING WHEEL, SCREAMING AND CRYING ALL THE WAY TO WORK, "PLEASE GOD DON'T LET THIS BE

MY SON". I DECIDED THAT INSTEAD OF GOING TO MY DESK ON THE 5TH FLOOR I WOULD STOP AT THE RECEPTION DESK AND CALL MY SON'S SCHOOL AND VERIFY HE WAS THERE. I REACHED MY BUILDING AND PARKED OUT FRONT WAS A KANSAS STATE TROOPER AND A KANSAS CITY, KANSAS POLICE CAR. I PROCEEDED TO THE RECEPTION AREA, BUT DID NOT SEE ANYONE IN THERE EXCEPT FOR THE RECEPTIONIST, FOR A FLEETING SECOND I THOUGHT MAYBE IT WASN'T THE CAR CODY WAS RIDING IN. HOWEVER, THAT MOMENT WAS OVER AS QUICK AS IT ARRIVED AS THE MINUTE I LOOKED AT THE RECEPTIONIST I KNEW THAT WHAT MY GUT TOLD ME WAS TRUE. I CAN REMEMBER FALLING TO THE GROUND AND KEPT SCREAMING NOT MY SON, NOT MY SON AND IN THE BACKGROUND I CAN HEAR HER SAYING "I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING." THE NEXT THING I KNOW THERE IS A STATE TROOPER AND A MAN I WORK WITH COMING FROM BEHIND A CLOSED DOOR AND CARRYING ME TO THE OTHER SIDE. THEY LEANED ME UP AGAINST A DOOR JAMB AND THE TROOPER LOOKED AT ME AND SAID "THERE HAS BEEN AN ACCIDENT AND YOUR SON WAS KILLED". I IMMEDIATELY ASKED HOW THE DRIVER WAS AND THE TROOPER SAID HE WAS IN SURGERY. THIS I LATER LEARNED WAS NOT CORRECT AS HE HAD ONLY A FEW CUTS AND SCRAPES.

INITIALLY IT WAS THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT BUT AS THE DETAILS UNFOLDED THIS WAS NOT THE CASE. THE DAY CODY DIED SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS CAME UP TO ME AND SAID THEY HAD TOLD CODY THEY DIDN'T LIKE HIM RIDING WITH TYLER BECAUSE HE DROVE RECKLESS. I ALSO HEARD FROM FRIENDS OF OTHER PEOPLE, TYLER HAD RUN THEIR RELATIVE OFF THE ROAD IN THE PAST. WHAT I LEARNED OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS SHOCKED ME AND HAS LEFT ME WITH SO MUCH GUILT AS JUST THE WEEK BEFORE CODY WAS KILLED HE AND I ARGUED BECAUSE I WOULDN'T LET CODY JUST GO RIDING AROUND WITH

FRIENDS. HE SAID IT WAS BECAUSE I DIDN'T TRUST HIM. I TOLD HIM IT WAS THE KIDS HE WOULD BE RIDING WITH I DIDN'T TRUST. I TOLD HIM WHEN HE IS THE PASSENGER IN A CAR HE HAS NO CONTROL OVER WHAT THE DRIVER WILL DO.

SO WHAT I THOUGHT WAS AN ACCIDENT TURNED OUT TO BE RECKLESS DRIVING. WHAT WE LEARNED FROM WITNESSES IS THAT TYLER GOING EAST ON K-32 WHEN IT WENT FROM A 4 LANE ROAD TO A 2 LANE ROAD WAS PASSING A CAR ON THE SHOULDER AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. THE WITNESS STATED HE THEN CUT IN FRONT OF HER AND WENT OUT TO PASS THE CAR IN FRONT OF HER, CROSSING A DOUBLE YELLOW LINE AND HITTING AN ON COMING CAR ALMOST HEAD ON. THE SPEEDOMETER ON THE CAR WAS STUCK AT 74 MILES PER HOUR, THIS IS A 45 MILE PER HOUR ZONE. WITNESSES STATED THE CAR WENT AIRBORN AND STARTED SPINNING AROUND COMING TO REST IN SOME TREES ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE ROAD. FOR SOME REASON ONLY ONE PERSON OUT OF 5 IN THE CARS WAS WEARING A SEAT BELT AND THAT WAS THE DRIVER OF THE OTHER CAR. HERE IS A GOOD EXAMPLE THAT OUR KIDS DO NOT ALWAYS DO WHAT WE TEACH THEM AS CODY ALWAYS WORE HIS SEAT BELT WHEN WE WERE IN THE CAR TOGETHER. TYLER HAD AN AIRBAG WHICH PROBABLY SAVED HIM FROM SERIOUS INJURY. CODY WAS THROWN TO THE BACK OF THE HATCH WHERE I LEARNED HE SUFFERED FRACTURED LEGS, FRACTURED ARMS AND AN OPEN SKULL FRACTURE TO THE LEFT SIDE OF HIS HEAD.

OF THE STATISTICS I GAVE YOU EARLIER, THERE ARE TWO THAT THIS ACCIDENT MEETS, THE DRIVER OF THE CAR MY SON WAS RIDING IN WAS 16 YEARS OLD AND ONLY HAD HIS LICENSE FOR 6 MONTHS. MY SON WAS KILLED WHEN HE WAS THE PASSENGER OF A CAR DRIVEN BY ANOTHER TEEN.

NOTHING I DO WILL CHANGE WHAT HAPPENED THAT TERRIBLE DAY, BUT MAYBE I CAN DO SOMETHING TO HELP SAVE SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE.

WITH STATISTICS LIKE THE ONES I HAVE STATED, WE CANNOT KEEP LETTING OUR IMMATURE, INEXPERIENCED 16 YEAR OLDS DRIVE WITHOUT MORE EXPERIENCE BEHIND THE WHEEL. WE PROTECT OUR CHILDREN FROM STRANGERS, DRUGS AND GUNS, SO WHY DON'T WE PROTECT THEM FROM 3,000 POUND VEHICLES. VEHICLES THE AUTO INDUSTRY KEEPS DESIGNING AND BUILDING TO BE FASTER AND FASTER. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO KEEP LOSING OUR CHILDREN TO AUTOMOBILE CRASHES. IT'S TIME WE STAND UP AND SHOW OUR CHILDREN WE CARE BY ADOPTING A GRADUATED LICENSING SYSTEM. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 36 STATES THAT HAVE ADOPTED GRADUATED LICENSING LAWS. 37 STATES ALSO HAVE NIGHT TIME RESTRICTIONS ON TEEN DRIVERS AND 21 STATES THAT LIMIT THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PASSENGERS IN CARS DRIVEN BY TEENS. THESE GRADUATED LICENSING LAWS NOW IN PLACE APPEAR TO BE SAVING YOUNG LIVES.

I KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THIS BILL WOULD BE MET WITH RESISTANCE FROM THE RURAL COMMUNITY, THOUGH I WASN'T EXACTLY SURE WHY. SO, I MET A GENTLEMAN FROM THE RURAL COMMUNITY AND ASKED HIM WHY DOES THE RURAL COMMUNITY OPPOSE THE GRADUATED LICENSING AND I WAS TOLD BECAUSE OF THE INCONVENIENCE. HAVE WE AS PARENTS NO MATTER IF WE LIVE IN THE COUNTRY OR THE CITY BECOME SO LAZY THAT WE WOULD WANT OUR CHILDREN TO RISK THEIR LIVES BECAUSE IT'S CONVENIENT?

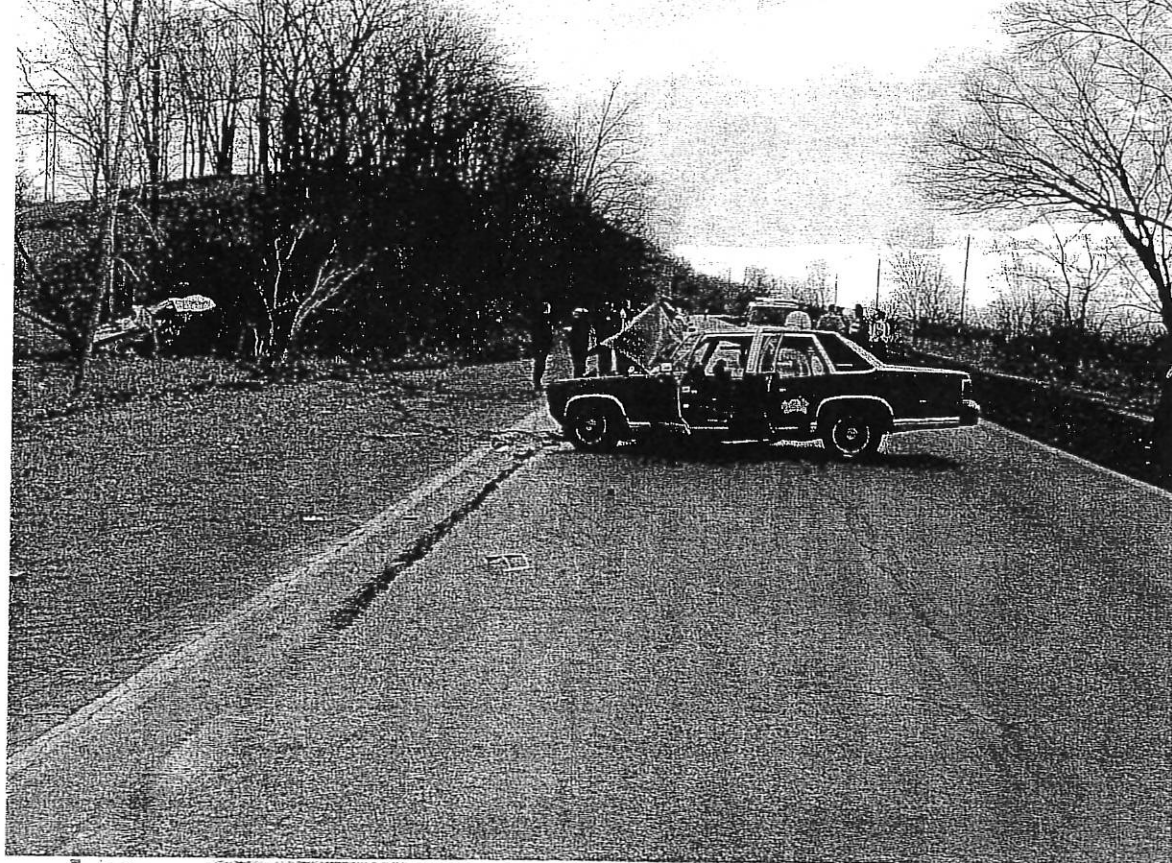
I HOPE BY MY COMING HERE TODAY AND SHARING MY STORY WITH YOU NOT ONLY SHOWS YOU THAT ADOPTING A GRADUATED LICENSING SYSTEM IS SOMETHING THAT DESPERATELY NEEDS TO BE DONE IF WE WANT TO SAVE OUR CHILDREN BUT MAKES YOU ALL THINK ABOUT HOW IMPORTANT YOUR CHILDREN AND YOUR FAMILY ARE TO YOU. WHAT HAPPENED TO MY SON COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE.

THE QUESTION IS, DOES THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN MEAN MORE TO US THAN A LITTLE INCONVENIENCE?

DRIVING RESTRICTIONS MAY NOT BE CONVENIENT FOR PARENTS.....BUT THEY ARE MUCH LESS OF A BURDEN THAN PLANNING A FUNERAL.

THANK YOU





Student's death in collision shocks high school

By ROBERT A. CRONKLETON
The Kansas City Star

Cody S. Gumm had practiced soccer only three times before taking the field in a junior varsity match last fall for Bishop Ward High School.

The 16-year-old junior scored one goal and assisted with two others, and he would have had two more goals if he had understood the rules a little better, recalled Ron Brown, the school's varsity soccer coach.

Not bad for a kid who had never played soccer, Brown said.

On his way to school Friday morning, Gumm was killed in a



Gumm

wreck on Kaw Drive, just east of 57th Street in Kansas City, Kan. He was riding in a Chevrolet Camaro driven by a fellow student, Tyler McDaniel, 16.

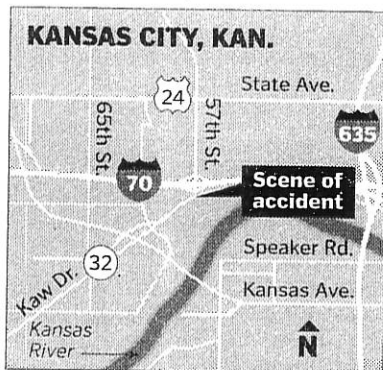
McDaniel's car crashed nearly head-on with a Ford Crown Victoria driven by Eduardo C. Maldonado of Kansas City, Kan.

McDaniel, and two passengers in Maldonado's car were treated at area hospitals and released. Maldonado was unhurt. No one was wearing a seat belt.

The news of Gumm's death shook the students at Bishop Ward in east Kansas City, Kan. Principal Dennis Dorr described Cody as a good student who had a lot of friends.

"Great kid," Dorr said. "Liked by everybody."

Soon after school began, Dorr told students about Gumm's death.



JOHN C. SOPINSKI/The Kansas City Star

Counselors from the Catholic school system went to Bishop Ward.

Classes were held Friday, but Dorr said weekend activities would be canceled. He said the school would be open from 10 to 11:30 a.m. today for a prayer service and as a place for students to meet and

talk about Gumm's death.

"We feel the need to have our kids together with one another so they can comfort one another," Dorr said.

Later in the morning, as students milled about in the halls hugging and crying, the Rev. Brian Klingele said a prayer over the intercom, asking God for comfort.

"We're hurting..." Klingele said. "It really hurts."

The Kansas Highway Patrol was investigating the crash.

Trooper Kris Keberlein said the Camaro was eastbound on Kaw Drive. He said a witness reported that the Camaro passed her by driving on the right shoulder before cutting back into the eastbound lanes.

Another witness, however, told him that the Camaro did not pass another vehicle.

The Camaro crossed the double-

yellow line into the westbound lane and collided with Maldonado's Crown Victoria. Keberlein said. The Camaro landed on an embankment, striking trees.

Keberlein said the Camaro traveled 75 to 100 yards from the point of impact. He said the car did not roll.

There was little or no braking before the crash, he said.

Joey Grimm, a 16-year-old junior at Bishop Ward, stopped at the scene of the crash later Friday to leave flowers.

"He was kind to everyone he met and never judged a book by its cover," Grimm said. "He never let anything get him down, and if he was knocked down, he would get back up again."

The Star's Mark Wiebe contributed to this report.

Student faces battery, manslaughter charges

By ROBERT A. CRONKLETON
The Kansas City Star

A 16-year-old Bishop Ward High School student has been charged with involuntary manslaughter in connection with a crash that killed a passenger in his car.

Tyler McDaniel of Kansas City, Kan., also has been charged with two counts of aggravated battery in connection with injuries suffered by occupants of another vehicle involved in the Feb. 21 wreck.

The charges were filed in Juvenile Court, Chris Schneider, a spokesman for the Wyandotte County district attorney's office, said Monday.

Killed in the crash was Cody S. Gumm, 16, who was riding to school with McDaniel.

McDaniel was driving a Chevrolet Camaro that crashed nearly head-on with a Ford Crown Victo-

ria on Kaw Drive, just east of 57th Street in Kansas City, Kan.

The charge alleges that McDaniel, who also was injured, was driving recklessly.

A Kansas Highway Patrol trooper who investigated the crash has said that the Camaro was eastbound on Kaw Drive, and a witness reported that the Camaro passed her by driving on the right shoulder before cutting back into the eastbound lanes.

Another witness, however, told the trooper that the Camaro did not pass another car before the crash.

Just before the crash, the Camaro crossed the double yellow line and entered the westbound lane.

To reach Robert A. Cronkleton, call (816) 234-5994 or send e-mail to bcronkleton@kcstar.com.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.
Wednesday, March 3, 2004

Teen gets probation for fatal car wreck

By ROBERT A. CRONKLETON
The Kansas City Star

A Kansas City, Kan., teenager was sentenced Tuesday to a year's probation for a fatal crash that killed a fellow high school student last year.

Wyandotte County Juvenile Court Judge David Boal also ordered Tyler E. McDaniel, 17, to serve 40 hours of community service, take a defensive driving course and pay \$5,000 in restitution to a crime victims support fund. Boal also restricted McDaniel's driver's license, limiting him to driving to and from school, work and meetings with his probation officer.

Boal had found McDaniel guilty of vehicular homicide, a misdemeanor, in the death of Cody S. Gumm, 16, of Kansas City, Kan.

Prosecutors had charged McDaniel with involuntary manslaughter, a felony, and two counts of aggravated battery for injuries suffered by occupants of another vehicle involved in the head-on wreck on Feb. 21, 2003. Boal, however, ruled that felony charges were not warranted. His sentence followed brief, emotional statements by Gumm's parents, Jerry Gumm and Cynthia Connor.

Connor asked that McDaniel be

sentenced to five years of probation, that his license be revoked for five years and that he serve community service. She also asked that McDaniel be ordered to send her a handwritten check for \$1 every week for the rest of his life.

Afterward, Connor said outside the courtroom that she was not satisfied with the sentence.

"One year of probation and 40 hours of community service — that is nothing," Connor said. "That is nothing for taking someone's life."

Cody Gumm died in a wreck on Kaw Drive, just east of 57th Street in Kansas City, Kan. He was riding with McDaniel, who was driving a Chevrolet Camaro, to Bishop Ward High School that morning.

A witness testified at the January trial that McDaniel passed her on the right shoulder before cutting back into the eastbound lanes. Another witness said McDaniel then crossed the double yellow line and started to pass him.

McDaniel's car crashed nearly head-on with a Ford Crown Victoria in which three persons were riding. None of the other persons involved in the crash, including McDaniel, was seriously injured.

To reach Robert A. Cronkleton, call (816) 234-5994 or send e-mail to bcronkleton@kcstar.com.

Teen guilty of misdemeanor in fatal car crash

By **ROBERT A. CRONKLETON**
The Kansas City Star

A Kansas City, Kan., youth was convicted Thursday of vehicular homicide, a misdemeanor, in a fatal crash that killed a fellow high school student last year.

Prosecutors had charged Tyler E. McDaniel, 17, with involuntary manslaughter, a felony, in the death of Cody S. Gumm, 16, of Kansas City, Kan. Prosecutors contended that McDaniel had been speeding and driving recklessly.

Wyandotte County District Judge David Boal said the evidence did not support the felony charge. Instead, he found McDaniel guilty of the lesser charge. Boal also dismissed two charges of aggravated battery for injuries sustained by occu-

pants of another vehicle involved in the wreck on Feb. 21, 2003.

Sentencing was set for 9 a.m. March 2.

Cynthia Connor, Gumm's mother, was upset with the ruling. Prosecutors told her that McDaniel will face only probation.

"I feel that the Wyandotte County justice system failed us today," Connor said outside the courtroom after the ruling. "The judge basically told everyone that it is all right to drive that way and kill somebody."

Fighting back tears, she said the ruling sends the wrong message to young drivers — that they won't face any consequences if they drive recklessly.

Connor said that McDaniel had never shown her any remorse for the death of her son.

First glance

■ A teenager from Kansas City, Kan., was convicted of a misdemeanor in the death of a fellow student. He had been charged with a felony.

McDaniel's attorney, Roger McLean of Kansas City, Kan., said that while he sympathized with Gumm's parents, it was a mistake to think McDaniel wasn't remorseful.

"That is something he will live with the rest of his life," McLean said. "I understand how they (Gumm's parents) feel. God, who couldn't be full of sympathy for them? But if they think Tyler is not feeling pain, too, they are just

wrong."

McClellan said that while McDaniel and his family were hoping for an acquittal, they thought that Boal's ruling was fair.

The wreck occurred on Kaw Drive, just east of 57th Street in Kansas City, Kan. McDaniel, driving a Chevrolet Camaro, was headed to Bishop Ward High School, along with Gumm.

According to testimony at a trial last month, McDaniel was eastbound on Kaw Drive. He was in the right lane, which was ending. McDaniel testified that he sped up because he was taught to never stop at a merge point because of the danger of being rear-ended.

A witness testified that McDaniel passed her by driving on the right shoulder before cutting back into

the eastbound lanes. Another witness said that McDaniel then crossed the double yellow line into the westbound lane and started to pass him.

McDaniel's car crashed nearly head-on with a Ford Crown Victoria in which three persons were riding. The Camaro became airborne and traveled 75 to 100 yards from the point of impact. The car landed on an embankment and struck two trees.

No one in either car was wearing a seat belt.

None of the other people involved in the crash, including McDaniel, was seriously injured.

To reach Robert A. Cronkleton, call (816) 234-5994 or send e-mail to bcronkleton@kcstar.com.

Sunlight sparkled though the window that Friday morning. Kids wandered into first hour like any other day. But today was different. There was a certain chipper in the atmosphere. Sweetheart activities were planned. Classes were shortened to accommodate an assembly. We were going to play Turner that evening. It was Friday.

The ominous voice that came over the intercom was stuck repeating in my head like a broken record. "Cody Gumm was killed." This is a dream; it has to be some kind of nightmare. But it wasn't a dream, this was reality.

He had a smile that could melt even the coldest heart. That smile is locked in my head. His smile was warm, sincere, caring, youthful and so full of life. And that laugh...

I only knew Cody for about six months. Those mere six months were more special than the 12 years I have known so many other people. After the news came I felt so horrible for his closest friends. I couldn't even imagine what they were going through. I was in so much pain and I wasn't even one of his closer friends. But then the more I thought about it I realized that they were lucky. I began to feel sorry for the people who never got to know Cody. People who knew Cody on any level were lucky to spend the time with him that they did. It's sad that some people never got the chance to know such a genuinely great guy. I just wish I could have gotten to know him better. I thought I had more time...

Through Cody's death I have realized that we are not invincible. Not only this, but you can never know when it is your time to go. I look at this tragedy and I take from it one of life's most important lessons that we so often neglect. Live each day to the fullest, and don't sweat the petty things. I truly believe that Cody did just that. He would turn even the most dreadful situation into a party and he always lit up the room with his witty sense of humor. While it may not seem like it was his time to go, he certainly lived his life the way one should. We should all take this lesson from Cody and don't put off what can be done now. Don't wait to build relationships - start now. Don't hold grudges - apologize and move on.

Sunlight sparkled through the window that Friday morning. That Friday morning that tears poured down like raindrops from the heavens. That Friday morning that became our worst nightmare. That Friday morning that Cody's life was taken so suddenly. That Friday morning that we said goodbye to our friend Cody, and hello to heaven's newest angel. That Friday morning...

Cody was only 16 years old when he was taken from the world to a better place. A place with no pain, no suffering, no heartache. Someday we will all join Cody once again, but until then we can just close our eyes and remember that fun-loving goofy guy with the heart made of gold. Keep on smiling, Cody.

Who Supports Graduated Driver Licensing?

- AAA
- Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety
- Allstate Insurance
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators
- American Automobile Manufacturers Association
- American Coalition for Traffic Safety
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association
- Beer Institute and its member companies
- Brain Injury Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Century Council
- Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S. and its member companies
- General Federation of Women's Clubs
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
- International Association of Chiefs of Police
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives
- National Association of Independent Insurers
- National Center on Education in Maternal and Child Health
- National Commission Against Drunk Driving
- National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances
- National Flight Nurses Association
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- National Safety Council
- National Sheriffs' Association
- National Transportation Safety Board
- Nationwide Insurance
- Police Executive Research Forum
- Students Against Destructive Decisions
- Society of Trauma Nurses
- State Farm Insurance
- USAA Insurance

Chairman and Transportation committee

Thank you for letting me be here today.

I am Debbie Ward a resident of Johnson County.

I am here to oppose a change in the driving age requirement Bill 294.

Strict enforcement of a proposed fourteen to seventeen year old seat belt requirement will eliminate the need for a driving age change. This combined with a strong no cell phone usage law is what Kansans need.

In the KC Star article on Sunday, March 4 Leanna Depue, director of the highway safety for Missouri Department of Transportation says, she was concerned because there had been little change in the numbers of fatalities in Missouri . Part of the problem has been enforcing the section of the law that allows police to pull over teens for not wearing their seat belts. An examination of Missouri accidents from 2003-2005 showed that 70 percent of the teens killed in fatal accidents were not wearing their seats belts.

The State of Kansas should require and enforce teenage seat belt usage and eliminate cell phone usage as proposed. Seat belts save lives and will dramatically reduce teen

House Transportation
Date: 3-14-07
Attachment # 8

fatalities. Enforcement of the proposed one passenger law will not only be cumbersome it will be ineffective. Focusing law enforcement on easily defined laws will yield the desired results.

Total elimination of the teen driving laws currently in place is too drastic. The sound decision to make, as representatives of our state, is a measured approach to the issue at hand.

As I look around the room I notice that we are all in our mid 30s and older. We were all given the opportunity to be a legal driver at 16. The government and our parents felt we were responsible enough to drive. Are we now telling our children we do not think that they are responsible to be driving at 16? Are we not teaching responsibility like our parents did? We have wonderful responsible teens in Kansas. They are good wholesome Midwestern kids. Please think about the message we will be sending our teens if we pass all of 294. Let them learn to drive at 14 with an adult and 15 to and from school and work, while they still listen and enjoy their parents, not when they are 16 and want to be independent and mature high schoolers. We need to teach them right and wrong while at home not when they are in college or living outside the home after high school.

Eighteen is too old for our teens to learn to drive with more than one passenger. Most 18 year olds are attending college or working outside the home and why restrict 99% of the responsible 18 year olds in Kansas when history has shown the real problem is with a small minority.

Finally, I realize that AAA has been very influential in this Bill. We do not need AAA telling us how to raise our teens in Kansas. We do not want to just turn our kids loose because we do not want to be bothered by having to drive them back and forth to school and activities. We want to teach our teen's responsibility and safety on the road under their parent's guidance.

I urge this Committee to look at all aspects of Bill 294.

The task before you today is to insure that 99% of the teens in Kansas grow up as hard working mature adults. Remember all of these teens when you decide what to with a small minority of teen drivers. You had the opportunity to drive as a teen, so why don't they deserve the same opportunity.

Kansas has responsible Teens.