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ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
AND AUTO SAFETY

JACKIE GILLAN

Jeany,
Sorry we missed
you. The meeting
with Sally Kazan
ran quite late.
I'll call you
tomorrow -
Jackie
6:15pm



**ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
AND AUTO SAFETY**

Jacqueline S. Gillan
Vice President

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TIMOTHY A. HOYT
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Joan B. Claybrook
President

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**ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
AND AUTO SAFETY**

**VOTE NO ON THE KEMPTHORNE AMENDMENT TO S.1173
TO ELIMINATE THE UNBELTED CRASH TEST**

**DON'T LEAVE UNBELTED TEENAGERS, YOUNG DRIVERS,
AND ADULTS UNPROTECTED IN A CRASH**

The Kempthorne Amendment will not work, here's why --

AIR BAGS SAVE LIVES:

- Over 2,000 lives have been saved by air bags -- many were not belted;
- At least 1/3 of people in cars still do not buckle up and they will be at increased risk;
- 65% of all fatally injured occupants are UNBELTED.

TEENAGERS WILL FACE GREATER RISK:

- Teenagers and young adults have low seat belt use rates;
- Over 4,000 teenagers a year die in motor vehicle crashes;
- 64% of teenage drivers and 78% of teenage passengers killed in crashes are UNBELTED.

CHILDREN WON'T BE SAFER:

- The majority of children killed were UNBELTED -- this would not have helped them;
- Immediate solution for children is to have them buckled up in the back seat;
- Parents Coalition For Air Bag Warnings OPPOSES the Kempthorne amendment.

AIR BAGS ARE BEING DEPOWERED:

- Air Bag Depowering already reduces the risk to out-of-position occupants;
- Elimination of unbelted test provides no additional safety benefits beyond depowering;
- The short-term solution is depowering -- the long-term solution is "smart" air bags;
- Rather than eliminating the existing unbelted crash test we need to add crash tests to protect unbelted children and women.

INVESTMENT IN NEW AIR BAG TECHNOLOGY WILL SLOW:

- Elimination of the unbelted test will undermine ongoing air bag research, educational, and technological development efforts;
- Would reduce need for "smarter" air bag systems and stifle development.

ELIMINATION OF THE UNBELTED TEST IS OPPOSED BY:

- Motor vehicle manufacturers that acknowledge that eliminating the unbelted test provides no greater safety benefit than depowering (one manufacturer representative stated that it would be unconscionable to eliminate the unbelted test while safety belt use rates in the U.S. remain low);
- Air bag suppliers who are developing new sensors and inflators that will customize air bag deployments to fit the occupant and the severity of the crash;
- The Parents Coalition For Air Bag Warnings (a coalition of parents of children who have been killed by air bags);
- Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety;
- Public Citizen.

ISSUES CONCERNING THE KEMPTHORNE AMENDMENT

1. In the mid-1980s the median delta V of fatal crashes was approximately 35 MPH. With the increase in belt use that has occurred since then, the median delta V is probably higher. People die in high speed crashes!
2. Even with belt use approaching 70 percent, more than half of the people who die in crashes are unbelted.
3. The temporary sled test option added to FMVSS 208 will permit depowered air bags while the industry has time to develop air bags that can provide protection in high speed crashes without presenting an unacceptable risk of injury to out-of-position (OOP) children in low speed crashes.
4. The current standard regulates air bag restraint performance. It does not regulate air bag aggressivity. That is a mistake.
5. Since the regulation (FMVSS 208) only addresses restraint performance, it has allowed the development of first generation air bags that present an unacceptable risk of injury to OOP drivers and passengers, particularly children.
6. The remedy is for FMVSS 208 to regulate both the restraint performance and the aggressivity of air bags. By simultaneously requiring air bags that can protect people in high speed crashes, the ones in which people die, while avoiding air bag induced injuries in low speed crashes, we will get improved air bags.
7. The problem with the Kempthorne amendment is that it completely shifts the balance away from regulating restraint performance to regulating air bag aggressivity. Thus, it has the potential to erode the benefits of air bags in order to reduce the risk of air bag induced injury.
8. Even if the amendment is modified so that it explicitly permits unbelted static tests to assure that air bags do not injure out of position occupants, unless it also requires meaningful crash protection performance at higher speeds, there is a real risk that air bags will be depowered to the point where they provide only minimal protection, if that.
9. The way to get improved air bags that are capable of both providing adequate levels of protection in high speed crashes while not producing unacceptable risks of injury to OOP occupants in low speed crashes is to directly regulate both of those aspects of air bags, restraint performance and air bag aggressivity.
10. The Kempthorne amendment, requiring only a belted test, does not really require very much in the way of restraint performance. The current 30 MPH crash test with belted dummies can easily be met without any air bag in the vehicle. Throughout the 1980s most vehicles met those requirements in 35 MPH NCAP tests in vehicles without any air bags, and the 35 MPH NCAP test is 36 percent more severe than the 30 MPH barrier test in the regulation.
11. The problem with the current regulation is that it does not represent the full range of crashes, the full range of occupants, and the full range of occupant positions. The solution is not to eliminate the one aspect of the regulation that produces superior occupant protection in high speed crashes. The solution is to add meaningful requirements that will assure the safety of out of position OOP women and children in lower speed crashes.

THE PARENTS' COALITION FOR AIR BAG WARNINGS

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Board of Directors

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Robert Sanders
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September 16, 1997

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kempthorne:

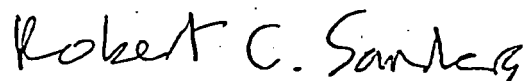
The Parents' Coalition for Air Bag Warnings, a non-profit organization of parents whose children have been killed or injured by passenger side air bags, opposes the Kempthorne Amendment to S. 1173 that would eliminate the unbelted crash test requirement from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208.

The removal of the unbelted test would not significantly reduce the danger of air bag injury to children. In addition, it would eliminate air bag protection for the large portion of the population that travels unbelted. For this reason, Mercedes-Benz testified in March of 1997 before the National Transportation Safety Board that elimination of the unbelted test in the United States would be "immoral."

More fundamentally, the proposed amendment fails to recognize that some air bag systems in production today safely protect both classes of occupants -- the unbelted teenager or adult in a severe collision and the child in low-speed collision. There have been no air bag deaths, for example, in the vehicles manufactured by Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Honda and a half dozen other manufacturers. In short, there is no need, with a properly designed air bag system, to expose unbelted teenagers and adults to death and severe injury in order to make air bags safe for children. The two objectives are not mutually exclusive.

The Parents' Coalition incorporates by reference the arguments set forth in its previously filed opposition to Senator Kempthorne's petition to NHSTA to remove the unbelted test from the performance requirements of Standard 208. For convenient reference, a copy of that position is attached to this letter.

Respectfully,



Robert C. Sanders
Director

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**COMMENTS OF PARENTS' COALITION FOR AIR BAG WARNINGS
TO PETITION OF SENATOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE FOR A
MORATORIUM ON THE UNBELTED TEST REQUIREMENT
DOCKET NO. 74-14**

William J. Butler, Jr.
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O'Brien, Birney and Butler
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Dated: April 3, 1997

Counsel of Record
Parents' Coalition for Air Bag Warnings

The Parents' Coalition for Air Bag Warnings ("Parents' Coalition") respectfully submits its comments to the Petition of Senator Dirk Kempthorne for a Moratorium on the Unbelted Test Requirement. The Parents' Coalition opposes Senator Kempthorne's petition and states as follows:

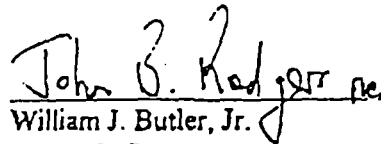
1. Senator Kempthorne's petition erroneously states that "the unbelted test standard is why an air bag is deployed with 200 mph force." The unbelted test standard, however, does not require that air bags deploy with any particular level of force. While it is true that the standard requires air bags to protect unbelted 50 percentile males in a 30 mph barrier crash, the standard in no way precludes design of an air bag that also protects children in low speed collisions. Designs that would accomplish both objectives include, but are not limited to (1) the dual inflation system developed by General Motors in the mid-1970's (with a more gentle deployment force in collisions under 18 mph Delta V); (2) the present Mercedes Benz system (with a deployment threshold of 12 mph Delta V for unbelted occupants and an 18 mph Delta V deployment threshold for belted occupants; and (3) compressed gas (rather than sodium azide) systems.

2. Senator Kempthorne's petition ignores that there is a wide variance in the present air bag systems in terms of a whole host of variables, including, but not limited to, deployment force, deployment threshold, location of bag module, size of bag, tethering of bag, excursion distance of bag in relation to the seat location variance, and the availability of pretensioners in shoulder harness. Proper air bag design with respect to these and other design variables will result in an air bag that is safe and effective for all size occupants.

3. Senator Kempthorne's petition erroneously states that nearly 70% of Americans wear seat belts. That figure does not take into account the drivers of sport utility vehicles, whose belt usage is universally acknowledged to be substantially below that of the general population. The petition also ignores that approximately 50% of all highway fatalities are to unbelted occupants, many of which are teenagers. Given the present level of belt usage in the United States, the federal government has substantial justification for maintaining the present unbelted test.

3. The Parents' Coalition agrees with the legal memorandum of John Womack, NHTSA's Acting Chief Counsel, that section 2508(a) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 precludes NHTSA from eliminating the unbelted test. The unbelted test can be eliminated only by amendment to section 2508(a) by Congress.

Respectfully submitted


William J. Butler, Jr.

Steven P. Benson

John B. Rodgers

O'Brien, Birney and Butler

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Buyers Up • Congress Watch • Critical Mass • Global Trade Watch • Health Research Group • Litigation Group
Joan Claybrook, President

September 16, 1997

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kempthorne:

I write to urge you to oppose the Kempthorne Amendment to S.1173, which would eliminate unbelted crash testing from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208. Removal of the unbelted crash test requirement would result in increased death and injury on our roads without reducing the harm that has occurred in low-speed crashes for unbelted children and small women. In addition, for the short term, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has amended Standard 208 to allow manufacturers to depower their airbags, which achieves the same result as removing the unbelted test requirement. This short-term solution will exist until new and more protective safety features are incorporated into airbag and vehicle designs.

Standard 208 is a public health measure that was issued to fulfill a Congressional mandate to reduce motor vehicle fatalities. Technical requirements of the Standard should not be partially written by Congress. NHTSA is in the process of revising this comprehensive occupant protection standard to better protect all real world vehicle occupants based on the best scientific data available.

Several policy reasons counsel against removing the unbelted test -- legislatively or administratively -- from Standard 208.

1. Removal of the Unbelted Test Will Not Reduce Airbag-Related Deaths

Removal of the unbelted test will not protect unbelted children and small women from harm during crashes. NHTSA figures show that the vast majority of occupants killed by airbags were unbelted or improperly belted. Considering this real world data, removal of the unbelted test makes little sense. NHTSA is revising Standard 208 to require a wider range of unbelted and belted crash tests with dummies representing children and small women, as well as adult men.

2. Removal of the Unbelted Tests Will Compromise Safety for At-Risk

Ralph Nader, Founder

1600 20th Street NW • Washington, DC 20009-1001 • (202) 588-1000

Occupants

Approximately 60% of people involved in fatal car crashes are unbelted. Teenagers are particularly lax about belt use and are statistically heavily overinvolved in crashes. Whether the airbag is characterized as a supplemental restraint or as part of an integrated restraint system that includes safety belts, the reality is that for many vehicle occupants the airbag is their only restraint. Public health measures designed to reduce motor vehicle fatalities must acknowledge and respond to these facts. The penalty for not wearing a safety belt should not be death or paraplegia.

3. Removal of the Unbelted Test Will Slow Development of Safety Technology

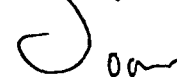
Analysis of reported airbag fatalities reveals significant differences in airbag performance between make and model. As of July 1997, airbags that deploy horizontally (out from the dashboard toward the occupant) were involved in all of the passenger-side airbag fatalities. But no passenger fatalities occurred in vehicles equipped with airbags that deploy vertically (upward into the windshield before deflecting toward the occupant); the vertical deployment provides a safety zone for occupants while complying with the unbelted test requirement. These data demonstrate that safe airbag designs, capable of meeting the unbelted requirement, already exist and should be used by all manufacturers.

Advanced technology (dual-stage inflators, crash severity sensors, occupant position sensors) that would protect unbelted adults in high-speed crashes and children in low-speed crashes also exists today. The airbag suppliers have provided information about the feasibility of these technologies to NHTSA. These technologies must be rapidly moved from testing facilities to manufacturing plants. The auto manufacturers should be pushed to bring this improved safety -- already within its grasp -- to the marketplace. If the unbelted test is removed from Standard 208, the primary incentive that has motivated safety research and development -- compliance with government standards -- will be removed as well. Standard 208 should call for the best science and technology available. Without unbelted testing, manufacturers will be able to comply with government requirements with minimal restraint systems that will prove incapable of protecting real world occupants in many real world crashes.

4. Airbags Save Lives

More than 2,000 Americans have been saved by airbags. Of those saved, at least 1200 were not wearing safety belts. Given these numbers it is morally unacceptable -- as the representative of Mercedes-Benz testified before the National Transportation Safety Board earlier this year -- to remove the unbelted test requirement.

Sincerely,


Joan Claybrook
President



ADVOCATES FOR HIGHWAY AND AUTO SAFETY

September 16, 1997

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President & COO
Nationwide Mutual
Insurance Company

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Executive Director
Trauma Foundation

President:

Judith Lee Stone

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Independent Insurance Agents
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Liberty Mutual
Insurance Company

Steve Hasenmiller
The Hartford

Rodger S. Lawson, PhD
Alliance of American Insurers

Gerald Maatman
Kemper Insurance Companies

Robert J. McMillan
Progressive Insurance

Robert Vagley
American Insurance Association

The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne
United States Senate
304 Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1204

Dear Senator Kempthorne:

We urge you to oppose an amendment being offered to S.1173 which would weaken the air bag standard. The Kempthorne amendment would eliminate the unbelted crash test requirement from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208, denying protection to a large segment of the American public.

One-third or more of vehicle occupants still do not buckle up. This sizeable portion of the population includes unbelted children and teenagers, as well as adults of all sizes. Moreover, unbelted occupants comprise at least 50 percent of crash fatalities. Teenagers and young adults in particular will be placed at greater risk because these age groups have relatively low rates of seat belt use. Teenagers and young drivers are over involved in fatal crashes and, in more than half the crashes where a teenager is killed another teenager is at the wheel. For the large portion of the population that does not use seat belts, air bags are the only line of defense in a crash.

In addition, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that over 2,000 people have been saved in air bag crashes. A large percentage of this number were unbelted occupants who would not be alive today except for the safety protection afforded by air bags. If the protection provided by air bags is drastically reduced, then fewer people will be saved each year.

Taking this drastic step is not necessary. NHTSA revised Standard 208 earlier this year to permit air bags that are depowered by an average of 20 to 35 percent (but in some cases up to 60 percent) compared to prior designs. This is intended to address a large part of the danger to children in the front seat. There is no additional safety benefit to be derived from elimination of the unbelted test. In fact, just the opposite will occur.

Depowering balances the safety concerns by trying to reduce the risk to children in low-speed crashes while maintaining safety protection for unbelted occupants in high-speed crashes. Elimination of the unbelted test would upset that balance. Auto manufacturers and air bag suppliers have stated that depowering has obviated the need for repeal of the unbelted test. Moreover, vehicles with



Oppose "Sec. 1407. Automatic Crash Protection Unbelted Testing Standard"

September 16, 1997

Page 2

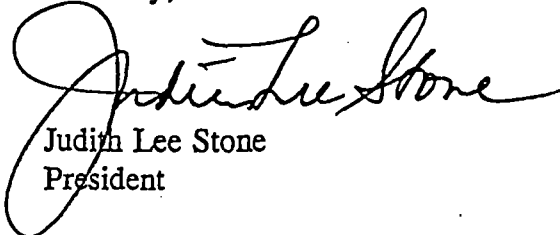
depowered air bags are just now rolling off the assembly line. Repeal of the unbelted test, even before the effectiveness of depowering is known, does not make sense. This is not the time to experiment further with the standard and to permit unnecessary design changes that could have adverse safety consequences for many occupants in severe crashes.

Repeal of the unbelted test, that provides high-speed impact protection for unbelted occupants, including unbelted children, does not eliminate the danger to unbelted children in low-speed crashes. That danger is being assiduously addressed through educational efforts to get children buckled up in the back seat, air bag design changes aside from depowering, accelerated research efforts led by NHTSA, and the development of "smart" air bag systems. While the risks posed by air bags in low-speed crashes are unacceptable, immediate protection for nearly all children is available if they are properly buckled in the back seat. The greatest crash danger to children is not air bags, but not being properly restrained. For example, in Idaho over the past three years, of the children that were fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes 78 percent were unrestrained. Recent surveys indicate that most children sit in the front passenger seat by choice, not out of necessity, and parents should insist that their children sit in the back seat.

The current standard, including the unbelted test, is not the problem. The entire vehicle is designed to pass the unbelted test, not just the air bag. Air bag equipped vehicles are already being designed within the parameters of the existing standard to eliminate the risk to unbelted occupants by: controlling air bag deployment thresholds based on seat belt use; setting deployment threshold levels higher; using depowered air bags and air bags with less aggressive design attributes (folding, tethering, etc.); and developing more sophisticated sensors and algorithms. These activities will eliminate the risk to unbelted children, repeal of the unbelted test will not.

We urge you to oppose the proposed amendment, "Sec. 1407. Automatic Crash Protection Unbelted Testing Standard", that would deny air bag protection to unbelted occupants.

Sincerely,



Judith Lee Stone
President

MC.

Executive Offices
1001 Nineteenth St. North
Suite 800
Arlington, VA 22209
703.276.5100



September 17, 1997

The Honorable John H. Chafee, Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of TRW Inc., the world's leading supplier of occupant restraint systems, I am writing to express our opposition to the amendment being offered by Senator Kempthorne to the pending ISTEA legislation which would eliminate the unbelted test standard in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208. As a member of the Automotive Occupant Restraints Council (AORC), TRW endorses the attached comment filed with NHTSA on March 26, 1997, which states that until aggressive action is taken to substantially increase seat belt usage rates, we cannot support the elimination of the unbelted test standard as currently contained in Senator Kempthorne's amendment.

We appreciate your attention to this matter. Please let me know if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin P. McMahon'.

Kevin P. McMahon
Manager, Government Relations

KPM:jsf

attachment

SAFETY SERVICES, INC.

September 20, 1997

The Honorable John W. Warner
United States Senate
225 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warner:

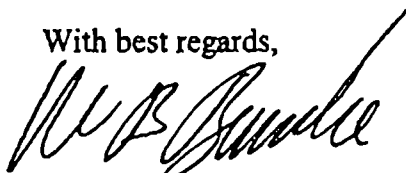
It is very important to remove the Kempthorne amendment from S.1473. The amendment would eliminate the unbelted requirement for testing compliance with NHTSA's air bag standard, Federal Motor vehicle Safety Standard 208. If it becomes law, lives will be lost on the Nation's highways.

While an argument in favor of the amendment could be made if safety belt use in this country were much higher, belt use is stalled at approximately 68 percent, much lower than many Western Nations. The air bag standard protects those people who buckle up and especially those who don't, particularly teenagers and other young people who have the lowest safety belt use rates. NHTSA has already taken steps to depower air bags in order to protect children. Further weakening of the standard will cost lives.

Air bags have saved over 2,000 lives. It will be tragic if the Kempthorne amendment passes and results in more fatalities on our highways. The penalty of not wearing a safety belt should not be increased risk of death on the highway.

If safety belt use increases substantially, an argument could be made for the change. But until it does, the air bag standard should require compliance with an unbelted dummy. I urge you to vote against the Kempthorne amendment.

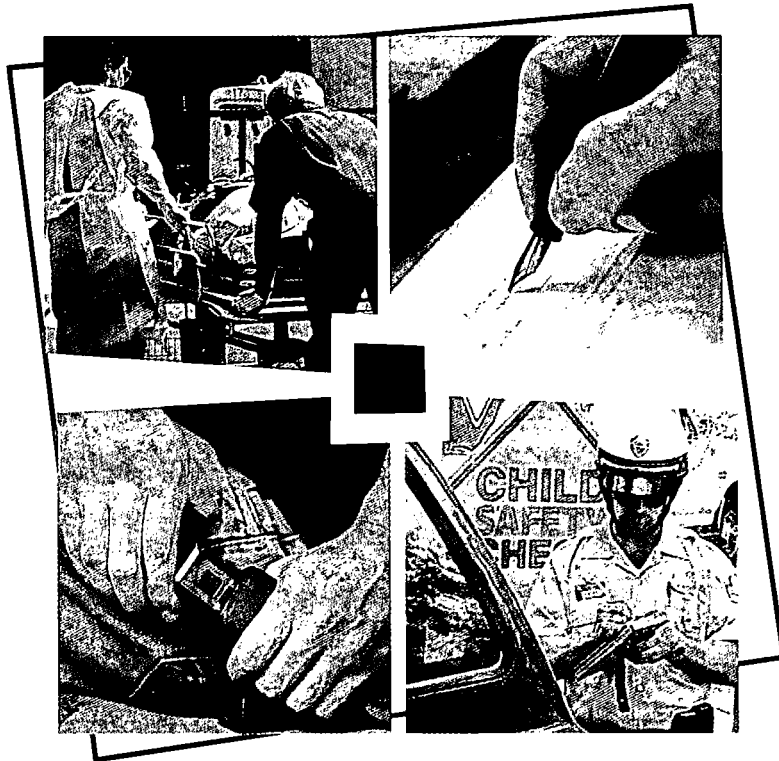
With best regards,



Michael B. Brownlee

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety is an alliance of consumer, safety, health and law enforcement groups and insurance and agents organizations working together to promote the adoption of effective highway safety legislation, standards, policies and programs at federal and state levels in order to reduce deaths, injuries and economic costs associated with motor vehicle crashes.

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fax: (202) 408-1699
World Wide Web: <http://www.saferoads.org>



Buckle Up AMERICA

There's Just **Too Much** to Lose



PARTNERSHIP
STRONG LAWS
ENFORCEMENT
EDUCATION
SAVING LIVES

PARTNERSHIP
STRONG LAWS
ENFORCEMENT
EDUCATION
SAVING LIVES



Campaign Strategy Key Messages

Actions That Make a Difference

Building Partnerships: Community
Building Partnerships: Business
Public Education
Legislation That Saves Lives
High Visibility Enforcement
Working With the Media

Tools to Buckle Up America

Taking Inventory of Your State
Sample Partner Letter
Potential Community Partners
Questions & Answers
Legislative Fact Sheet
Sample Press Release – Supporting Partnerships
Sample Press Release – Supporting High Visibility Enforcement Efforts
Sample Press Release – Supporting Legislative Efforts
Sample Proclamation
Sample Op-ed Article
Sample Drop-in News Article
Sample Public Service Announcements
Logo Slicks



Strengthening Partnerships to Save Lives

It's time to Buckle Up America.

Every hour someone dies in America simply because they didn't buckle up. Failure to buckle up contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior.

Adults who do not buckle up are sending children the message that it's all right not to wear a seat belt. Children model adult behavior. Research shows that 70 percent of the time if a driver is unbuckled, children riding in that vehicle won't be buckled either.

And the costs go beyond those killed and the tragic loss to their families. Everyone pays for those who don't buckle up – in higher taxes, higher health care and higher insurance costs.

Community and health groups, safety advocates, law enforcement, businesses and concerned citizens are working to address this issue in states and communities all across the nation. They are calling for greater seat belt and child safety seat use to save lives, reduce injuries and save dollars through stronger laws and enforcement and more public education. They are forging broad, community-based partnerships to **Buckle Up America**.

Buckle Up America proposes to reach across every state through both the public and private sector into each community, each household and touch every individual.

In support of these efforts, President Clinton is offering leadership and resources through the Secretary of the Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. He has also directed every Federal agency to be a player and a partner and set an example by maximizing seat belt use in their jurisdictions.

The President's objective is to support and help expand the hard work being done all over the country at the national, state and local levels by people in the public and private sectors. To meet both national and local goals,

Buckle Up America is based on four essential elements that will:

- Build and expand state and community coalitions in public-private partnerships that will;
- Educate the public about primary seat belt laws, support enforcement efforts and encourage everyone to buckle up;
- Strengthen seat belt and child passenger safety laws appropriate for your state by upgrading from secondary to primary (standard) enforcement, removing exemptions and gaps, increasing fines, and adding penalty points; and
- Enforce the existing laws through active, high visibility enforcement programs.

The Federal government can support these important efforts to save lives, but the job can only be done through effective action by citizens and organizations at the state and local levels. We have looked at what has worked historically as well as at recent program successes from across the nation as the basis to design and build this Action Kit. We hope it serves as an effective tool to help create effective, community-based efforts throughout the country.

NATIONAL GOALS

- Increase national seat belt use to 85% by the year 2000
- Reduce child occupant fatalities 15% by the year 2000
- Increase national seat belt use to 90% by the year 2005
- Reduce child occupant fatalities 25% by the year 2005



Region I**(CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)**

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Region VII**(IA, KS, MO, NE)**

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North Mariana Islands)**

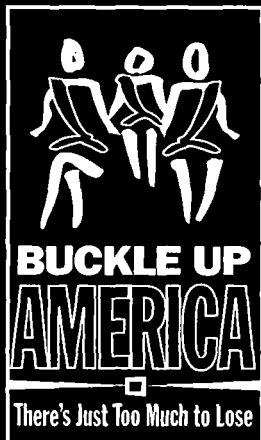
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Region X**(AK, ID, OR, WA)**

Curtis A. Winston
Regional Administrator, NHTSA
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Seattle, WA 98174

Please join

Buckle Up America



America

enforcement. With your help, we can see real gains in seat belt use to save lives, reduce injuries and save money.

Please get involved and lend your expertise. Everyone has something to offer.

It's as easy as 1-2-3...

1. Provide the information requested below.
2. Check off the activities of interest to you.
3. Send the attached card to the NHTSA regional office for your state (addresses are listed on the **Buckle Up America** Action Kit folder).

**Yes, I plan to join
Buckle Up America.**

By providing the information requested on this card, you do not commit to do anything. It is merely an expression of interest. Your name will be used to establish a database of partners that will be made available as a possible contact to others in your area working on Buckle Up America. Your name will also be placed on a mailing list so you can receive

Please join Buckle

City ST Zip

Phone Fax

E-Mail address

I would be interested in the following activity/activities:

- ☐ Lend my name and organization's name in support of **Buckle Up America**.
- ☐ Participate in a local grassroots coalition to educate citizens and support stronger legislation and enforcement.
- ☐ Contact the governor and my state legislators to urge passage of legislation such as primary (standard) seat belt legislation or comprehensive child passenger safety legislation.
- ☐ Write letters and opinion-editorials or contact news media in support of stronger legislation and enforcement.
- ☐ Support law enforcement in their efforts to enforce seat belt and child safety seat laws.
- ☐ Work with my organization to educate our members and enact and enforce strict seat belt and child safety seat policies for our employees or members.

Your work and support will help save the lives of children and adults in your community and across the nation.
Thank you.

NHTSA
People Saving People

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 15, 1997

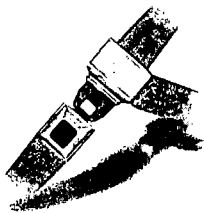
Safety is my highest transportation priority, and we cannot tolerate the loss of 40,000 lives each year on America's highways, a tragedy affecting every community in our nation. As we prepare to launch a new campaign to make our streets and roads safer for all Americans, I ask for your participation.

The single most effective action we can take to save lives on America's roadways is to increase seat belt use. In January of this year, I directed the Secretary of Transportation to work with members of Congress, the states, the automobile and insurance industries, safety and consumer groups, medical and health organizations, and concerned citizens all across the country to develop a plan that will save lives and reduce injuries on our highways. This past spring, Secretary Slater and I announced our plan, the Presidential Initiative for Increasing Seat Belt Use Nationwide.

Our initiative sets ambitious goals: increasing seat belt use to 85 percent and reducing child fatalities by 15 percent by the year 2000. The four major elements of the plan -- educating the public, building public-private partnerships, enacting strong legislation, and actively and visibly enforcing seat belt and child safety seat laws -- reinforce the work of concerned citizens who are mobilizing across the nation to increase seat belt use. This campaign is an opportunity for all Americans to take responsibility for the safety of their own communities.

As a father and a husband, I ask you to join me in taking this campaign for safe streets and highways to every American. Working together, we must encourage all Americans to wear seat belts and to secure children ages 12 and under in the back seat in a restraint system appropriate to their age and size -- every time and on every trip. Become a partner in the campaign to "Buckle Up America," making a personal commitment to always buckle up when traveling. Together, we can reach our goals to save lives and prevent injuries on America's roadways.

Bill Clinton



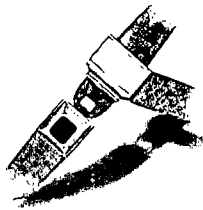
Buckle Up America Strategy

Increasing the national seat belt use rate from the current 68 percent to 90 percent would prevent an estimated 5,536 deaths, 132,670 injuries and save society \$8.8 billion annually. But the numbers will not move on their own. To reach 90 percent belt use nationally, every state and community should be involved in **Buckle Up America** and every campaign needs to develop effective public-private partnerships. Here are the four key elements to embrace as we work together to **Buckle Up America**.

THE FOUR KEY ELEMENTS TO INCREASING SEAT BELT USE

- 1 Make Buckling Up a Priority.** Increasing seat belt use is still the single most effective thing we can do to save lives and reduce injuries on American roadways.
- 2 Tailor the Campaign to Your Needs.** No single approach will work in every state or community. Identify your needs and opportunities and then design your **Buckle Up America** effort to best meet those needs.
- 3 Use Messages That Work.** Research shows that there are three key messages that move Americans to action. Use these key messages to help explain why **Buckle Up America** is so important to all of us.
 - **Kids** – Unbuckled drivers endanger kids by setting bad examples for them to follow. When a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time so are children riding in that vehicle.
 - **Costs** – Unbuckled occupants cost us *all* money because we all pay for crash victims. Inpatient hospital care costs for unbuckled crash victims are 50 percent greater than for belted victims.
 - **Everyone has a role** – We all have a stake in this problem and we are all part of the solution. We must all buckle ourselves, buckle our children and call upon others to do the same.
- 4 Implement a Four-Part Strategy.** In order to reach the national goals and the goals you identify at the state and community levels, we must concentrate our efforts on four tracks simultaneously.
 - **Organize, Organize, Organize** – Organizing strong partnerships is the heart of our work to achieve 90 percent seat belt use. We must educate citizens, create state and local partnerships, and broaden and activate these partnerships to pass stronger legislation, and support enforcement to achieve the goals of **Buckle Up America**.
 - **Public Education** – Generate visibility about **Buckle Up America**, your activities, and national and state goals. Remind others that the price for unbuckled occupants is too high, and that we all have a part to play in buckling up America.
 - **Legislation** – Work to pass primary (standard) seat belt laws in every state and close the gaps in child passenger safety laws to ensure that all children are covered in all seating positions.
 - **Enforcement** – Support local law enforcement's efforts to seek compliance with the state's seat belt and child passenger safety laws. Publicize your support of law enforcement's efforts.





Buckle Up America Key Messages

What motivates people to buckle up? What information helps others understand why everyone should ride buckled – on every trip? Research conducted for **Buckle Up America** shows that the following statements best summarize the critical messages that work to move people to action.

No matter what state you live in, these persuasive messages most often will be the same. These key messages can help guide your communications as you create state and local programs. And when questions arise about seat belts and child passenger safety issues, these key messages can help you answer them.

IT'S TIME TO BUCKLE UP

Seat Belts Are a Priority

Every hour someone dies in America simply because they didn't buckle up.

Failure to buckle up contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior.

Despite terrible traffic problems such as aggressive driving, increasing seat belt use is still the single most effective thing we can do to save lives and reduce injuries on America's roadways.

Protecting Kids

Adults who don't buckle up are sending children a deadly message that it is all right not to wear a seat belt. Children model adult behavior. Research shows that if a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children riding in that vehicle won't be buckled either.

Data suggests that education alone is not doing the job with young people, especially males ages 16 to 25 – the age group least likely to buckle up. They simply do not believe they will be injured or killed. Yet they are the nation's highest-risk drivers, with more drunk driving, more speeding, and more crashes. Neither education nor fear of injury or death is strong enough to motivate this tough-to-reach group. Rather, it takes stronger seat belt laws and high visibility enforcement campaigns to get them to buckle up.

Saving Lives

Seat belts are the most effective safety devices in vehicles today, estimated to save 9,500 lives each year. Yet only 68 percent of the motor vehicle occupants are buckled. In 1996, more than 60 percent of the occupants killed in fatal crashes were unrestrained.

If 90 percent of Americans buckle up, we will prevent more than 5,500 deaths and 132,000 injuries annually.

Saving Dollars

The cost of unbuckled drivers and passengers goes beyond those killed and the loss to their families. We all pay for those who don't buckle up – in higher taxes, higher health care and higher insurance costs.

On average, inpatient hospital care costs for an unbelted crash victim are 50 percent higher than those for a belted crash victim. Society bears 85 percent of those costs, not the individuals involved. Every American pays about \$580 a year toward the cost of crashes. If everyone buckled up, this figure would drop significantly.

By reaching the goal of 90 percent seat belt use, and 25 percent reduction in child fatalities by the year 2005, we will save \$8.8 billion annually.

Everyone Is Part of the Solution

Buckle Up America is a broad, public-private partnership of community and health groups, safety advocates, businesses, law enforcement, legislators, public officials and concerned citizens. These partners realize that seat belts and child safety seats save lives and money. And because everyone is affected when others ride unbuckled, everyone must be a part of the solution.

Legislation

States with secondary enforcement laws average only 63 percent belt use. But states with primary (standard) enforcement seat belt laws average 78 percent belt use – 15 percentage points higher. Currently, only 13 states and the District of Columbia have primary seat belt enforcement laws.

Everyone would agree that protecting lives with seat belts is at least as important as a broken tail light or littering. Yet, while virtually every state has primary laws that allow law enforcement officers to stop and ticket a violator for having a broken tail light or for tossing trash out the window, not all states have primary laws for seat belt use.

State laws should explicitly require children to be in age- and size-appropriate child safety seats or seat belts. But many states currently have “gaps” in child passenger safety laws – holes that leave certain aged children vulnerable in certain seating positions. States should close these gaps to protect all children in all seating positions.

High Visibility Enforcement

Research shows that high visibility enforcement works because, with many part-time and non-belt users, the fear of a citation and significant fine outweighs their fear of being injured or killed in a crash.

When asked whether they support primary enforcement laws – laws that give the police the authority to stop and ticket an unbuckled driver just as they do other routine violations of the law like littering or driving with a broken tail light – the public overwhelmingly supports stronger laws. (Source: Public Opinion Strategies, July 1997)

During the past four years, when no new state laws were enacted and no widespread enforcement efforts were undertaken, national seat belt use has remained at just under 68 percent. But in those places that implemented high visibility enforcement programs, seat belt use rates increased dramatically.

Actions That Make a Difference



Building Partnerships Community

Travel across the country and you will witness **Buckle Up America** already in progress. Begin at the eastern shore where Maryland has recently passed a primary enforcement law. Head down south to North Carolina and chances are, if you are unbuckled, you will get a ticket thanks to their highly-effective public education and enforcement program, *Click It Or Ticket*. Travel to Georgia where seat belt and child safety seat enforcement is a priority. Go west to Oklahoma and experience the wave that swept through the state and allowed for passage of a primary seat belt law. Or go to New Mexico, which has high adult seat belt and child safety seat use. There, the focus is on getting older children buckled up. Head northwest to Washington state which has a secondary seat belt law, but one of the highest seat belt use rates in the country. This is due to the strong enforcement of the law and the citizens' understanding that when people do not buckle up, the community suffers through lost lives and dollars.

In each of these states, partnerships are making the difference between positive change and the status quo. Across the country, **Buckle Up America** campaigns are using methods that work best to meet state goals. To build seat belt safety awareness in your community, it may take pushing for stronger laws, supporting law enforcement, or partnering with safety organizations to get the message out to your community. Regardless of your needs, your collective efforts will move our nation toward 90 percent seat belt use by the year 2005.

CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

Everyone has something to offer **Buckle Up America**. Change comes about when individuals and organizations unite to pool resources and call upon a variety of experiences to help meet goals and objectives. In order to realize 90 percent seat belt use and a 25 percent reduction in child fatalities by 2005, every campaign must develop strong and diverse partnerships, consisting of committed individuals and organizations. This Action Kit includes tools you can use to help build local **Buckle Up America** partnerships.

TAKING INVENTORY OF YOUR STATE AND COMMUNITY

In order to focus your campaign's efforts in areas that will bring about the greatest gains, you must first take an inventory of your state and community. Determine what your state's seat belt use rate is, where you would like the use rate to be over a given time, and what action is most likely to help meet the goals. This Action Kit includes a chart to help you take inventory of your state and assess where the greatest gains can be made in an effort to increase seat belt and child safety seat use.

Ask questions such as how much public education has to occur to generate support for **Buckle Up America** efforts? Does the state have a primary or a secondary enforcement law? If secondary, is there strong public support for strengthening the law? Where are there gaps in the state's child passenger safety laws? How strong are law enforcement efforts? After you have found some answers, you can then decide the best way to allocate resources in order to realize improvements. Every state and community is different and no one particular strategy will work universally.



DEFINING CAMPAIGN GOALS

Having taken inventory of your state, utilize your partnerships to effectively work toward improvements in the areas that you have identified. Strive for reasonable and obtainable goals. Be specific about what activities will work best to increase seat belt use in your state or community. What will **Buckle Up America** do? Will your **Buckle Up America** campaign focus on public education or enforcement? Will it work to close gaps in a child passenger safety law or pass a primary seat belt law?

DEVELOPING PARTNER INCENTIVES

It's important to explain to potential partners why increasing seat belt and child safety seat use should be so important to them and the community. Explain the benefits of becoming a **Buckle Up America** partner. Of course, the "hook" will vary depending upon the organization or individual partner. Keep in mind that individuals and organizations are motivated and energized for different reasons. Spell out what their role will be as a **Buckle Up America** partner. Some suggested incentives might be:

- Making materials and coalition building tools available to partners
- Keeping partners informed on **Buckle Up America's** goals and progress
- Informing partners of **Buckle Up America** success stories
- Helping to generate media coverage of partners' involvement in **Buckle Up America**
- Building public acknowledgement for a partner's good work in the community

WHAT EVERY COMMUNITY CAN DO

- Create a **Buckle Up America** coalition in your community.
- Meet or exceed the national goals for seat belt use and reduction in child occupant fatalities.
- Participate in national programs that recognize community progress in achieving high seat belt use such as:
 - National Safety Belt Honor Roll
 - Chiefs' Challenge sponsored by the International Association of Chiefs of Police
- Seek leadership and participation from mayors, councils, boards and other officials.
- Issue a proclamation in support of **Buckle Up America's** efforts.
- Support traffic enforcement of occupant protection laws as one of the best investments of scarce enforcement resources.
- Implement seat belt use policies for all public employees – encourage businesses to do the same.
- Publicize state occupant protection laws and support activities to improve them.
- Establish a Safe Community coalition to address your community's motor vehicle crash and other injury problems.*
- Organize child safety seat loaner programs and activities which encourage proper use of child safety seats.
- Organize child safety seat checkpoints and clinics, educating caregivers on proper child safety seat installation.
- Encourage hospitals, educators, health and child care providers to educate parents about the importance of occupant protection for their families and children.
- Work with local media outlets to reach as many people as possible with messages about seat belts.
- Encourage prosecutors and judges to fully support the enforcement of occupant protection laws, and to adjudicate offenses to the full extent of the law.
- Contact local legislators asking them to support strong primary seat belt legislation.

Working together, we can make seat belt use a new priority, invigorate the public, work toward strengthening laws and enforcement efforts, and reach both national and state goals.

* For more information on Safe Communities coalitions, contact your NHTSA regional office.

Actions That Make a Difference



Building Partnerships Business

THE COST TO EMPLOYERS

It pays for businesses to get involved in **Buckle Up America**. Crashes drive up costs for health and disability insurance and increase workers' compensation expenses for employers. In 1994, on- and off-the-job traffic crashes cost American businesses an estimated \$55 billion. And, traffic crashes are the leading cause of on-the-job deaths and injuries.

As community leaders and employers, you have the ability to educate many people. Your influence with others in the business community and with political leaders can help push for and shape stronger legislation and lend support for high visibility enforcement efforts.

What Your Business Can Do

- Join the **Buckle Up America** partnership in your community.
- Implement and enforce a comprehensive company-wide seat belt program and policy to protect your employees and their families.
- Become an active proponent for primary (standard) seat belt legislation and strengthening child passenger safety laws in your state. Remember that corporations, businesses and business associations have a strong voice in state legislatures.
- Team with local law enforcement and community members to support their efforts to improve seat belt use in the community.
- Donate merchandise or discount coupons that law enforcement officers could distribute to properly buckled occupants.
- Use your company's internal and external communication methods to publicize **Buckle Up America** goals, achievements and success stories, and provide information about how others can get involved in **Buckle Up America**.
- Present a child passenger safety seat to every employee who gives birth to a child or adopts a child.
- Establish a Safe Communities coalition to address your Community's motor vehicle crash and injury problems.
- Join the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) and participate in their "Belt America 2000" program.
- Work with the National Safety Council to raise awareness about seat belts within your company and community.
- Install "Seat Belts Buckled?" signs at the exits of company parking lots.
- Address business and civic groups on the benefits of seat belt and child safety seat use.

UNBUCKLED DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS COST BUSINESSES MONEY

- On-the-job crashes cost employers almost \$22,000 per crash and \$110,000 per injury.
- In one year, off-the-job crash injuries cost employers over \$14 billion.*
- In one year, employer health care (medical) spending on crash injuries was nearly \$9 billion. Another \$9 billion was spent on sick leave and life and disability insurance for crash victims.*
- Inpatient hospital costs for unbelted crash victims are 50% higher than those for belted crash victims.

*NHTSA, Total Cost to Employers
by State and Industry,
December 1996





McDONALD'S*

McDonald's – Supporting Law Enforcement

McDonald's assists law enforcement in protecting citizens by encouraging the use of seat belts and child safety seats. During law enforcement's efforts to gain compliance with state seat belt and child passenger safety laws, McDonald's makes available coupons to distribute to drivers and their passengers who are properly buckled.

McDonald's believes that this positive reinforcement will help keep families safe and help spread the message that seat belts and child safety seats save lives.



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Company Seat Belt Policies

One of the most effective ways businesses can educate and show their support for increasing seat belt and child safety seat use is to establish or enhance a corporate occupant protection policy. In every state but one, it is the law for every driver to wear his or her seat belt. Your company's policy will help to keep all employees driving within the letter of the law. When writing or updating your company's seat belt policy, remember these four key points:

- Assess your company's current losses due to motor vehicle crashes.
- Establish and enforce a seat belt use requirement that has the full support of your executive management.
- Make sure your employees fully understand the policy.
- Regularly conduct employee seat belt use surveys and post the results.

UPS*

UPS – Setting the Standard for Corporate America

With more than 302,000 employees across the country, UPS is the corporate seat belt leader in the package delivery field. Thirty years ago, UPS installed seat belts in its vehicles as a commitment to driver safety. It has since created a comprehensive driver training program and seat belt policy, and as a result, all drivers wear their seat belts. UPS now has a zero-tolerance seat belt policy for its drivers. "If the wheels are in motion, the driver must be secured by a seat belt," says a company driver.

Despite the fact that a UPS driver gets in and out of a vehicle more than 100 times per day, he or she must wear a seat belt at all times. Since implementing the seat belt policy, UPS driver fatality and injury rates have steadily declined.



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PROMOTE YOUR COMPANY'S POLICY

Promote your company's seat belt policy to ensure that employees are aware of it and are following company rules. You can reinforce your seat belt policy by publicizing it in company brochures, flyers, and in pay envelopes or posting the policy on bulletin boards and distributing information at meetings and company gatherings.



Ameritech – Making Seat Belts Company Policy

Ameritech has its own company policy for “Saving Lives and Money By Increasing Employee Safety Belt Use.” Their policy reads:

Ameritech employees who drive company owned or leased vehicles or personal vehicles while conducting company business shall properly use safety belts as designed by the manufacturer and also ensure that all passengers use these devices properly. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.



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NETS - NETWORK OF EMPLOYERS FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY

For more information on developing corporate seat belt policies, contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) regional office for your state and ask about the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) program, “Belt America 2000.”

By implementing and enforcing a corporate seat belt use policy and by joining in local **Buckle Up America** activities, you will help to protect the lives of your employees and their families and reduce your company's crash-related costs.

SAMPLE SEAT BELT USE POLICY

{Insert company's name} recognizes that seat belts are the most effective safety device in motor vehicles today. They are the first line of defense in protecting us from death and injury in motor vehicle crashes. When people don't buckle up they hurt {insert company's name} and its employees and families.

Therefore, SEAT BELTS AND CHILD SAFETY SEATS WILL BE PROPERLY USED BY ALL OCCUPANTS TRAVELING IN ALL MOTOR VEHICLES USED WHILE CONDUCTING COMPANY BUSINESS. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Actions That Make a Difference



Public Education

For the public to endorse **Buckle Up America**, they need to know why seat belts and child safety seats are so important and they need to understand the consequences we all face from those who don't buckle up. The best way to provide that information is through public education. To effectively and most widely educate people means using all the tools at the campaign's disposal – company newsletters, special events, media outreach and even one-on-one contacts between individuals. It's letting people know the dangerous and costly effects unbuckled occupants have on individual lives, families and society.

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR CHANGE

But public education can do more than just inform. It can create an environment for change. By focusing on messages that work, public education can build public and political understanding and endorsement for local **Buckle Up America** partnerships and their efforts to pass stronger legislation and support enforcement.

It's this dynamic combination of stronger legislation, enforcement and public education that has proven effective in changing behavior. While public education may alter the *attitudes* of people who refuse to buckle up full time, it may not be enough to change their *actions*. When you combine public education with primary seat belt laws, enforcement and penalties, these people begin to buckle up and buckle up their children.

MESSAGES THAT MOVE THE PUBLIC: EVERYONE IS PAYING THE PRICE

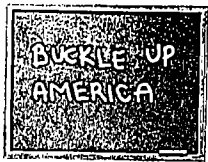
Failure to buckle up affects everyone, not just those involved in a crash. It's important to keep that in mind when educating the public to support legislation and enforcement.

Families are paying the price. Every nine seconds someone is injured in a traffic crash. Every 13 minutes someone is killed.

Our children and young people are paying the price. Traffic-related injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults ages six to twenty-seven. Research also shows that minority youth are at even greater risk because they are less likely to be buckled up. And adult behavior affects children. Research shows that when a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children riding in that vehicle are unbuckled too.

Businesses are paying the price. On-the-job crashes are costing employers \$22,000 per crash and \$110,000 per injury due to lost productivity and higher insurance and medical costs.

Society is paying the price. Eighty-five percent of all medical costs of crash victims fall on society, not the individuals involved. Medicare, Medicaid and other taxpayer funded sources pay 24 percent of those costs. When crash victims are unbuckled, their medical treatment costs are 50 percent higher. Traffic-related injuries are the leading cause of all injury deaths in America. This problem is serious and it is immediate.

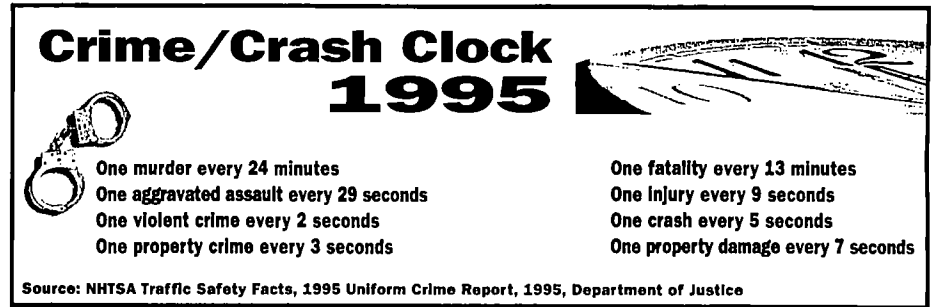


EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY

Everyone can play a part to educate and urge those they know to buckle up. Community groups can use their existing communications tools – like newsletters or web sites – to spread the word. Businesses can hold safety meetings and implement strong seat belt policies as part of a comprehensive employee safety program.

And individuals can take part by setting the example. It is vital that all

Americans protect themselves and their children by buckling up on each and every trip – whether it's across the country, across town or to the neighborhood store – and talk to those they know about doing the same.



EVERYONE IS PART OF THE SOLUTION

Unlike many serious threats to public health, the solution to this problem is simple. It's one click away. We must work together – as individuals, community members, public officials, business and health leaders and law enforcement officials – to educate those we touch to support those interventions proven to work in getting more children and adults buckled up. It means closing the gaps in child passenger safety laws, working for primary enforcement laws and supporting law enforcement's efforts to save lives through strict compliance with the laws.

SET THE EXAMPLE AND EDUCATE

- Join the **Buckle Up America** partnership in your community.
- Buckle up.
- Buckle up everyone on every trip, regardless of whether it's across the country or to the corner market.
- Instruct your children to always buckle up in other peoples' vehicles.
- Ask and encourage friends, family and loved ones to buckle up and use child safety seats. Friends don't let friends ride unbuckled.
- Require driving-age teenagers to buckle up themselves and to require their friends to do the same as a condition of driving your vehicle.
- Properly secure every child in a vehicle in a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt appropriate for the child's age, height and weight.
- Seek assistance from law enforcement, fire & rescue and health specialists if unsure about the correct way to secure your child in a safety seat.
- Never put an infant in a rear-facing child safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle with a passenger side air bag.
- Always properly restrain children 12 and under in the back seat – the safest place in a vehicle.
- Work with advocacy groups and support strengthening seat belt and child passenger safety laws.
- Work with advocacy groups to support high visibility enforcement of seat belt and child passenger safety laws.
- Write to newspapers and television and radio station general managers supporting your partnership to increase safety belt and child safety seat use and law enforcement's efforts to urge compliance with the seat belt and child passenger safety laws.
- Never allow anyone to ride in the bed of a pick-up truck.

Actions That Make a Difference



Legislation That Saves Lives

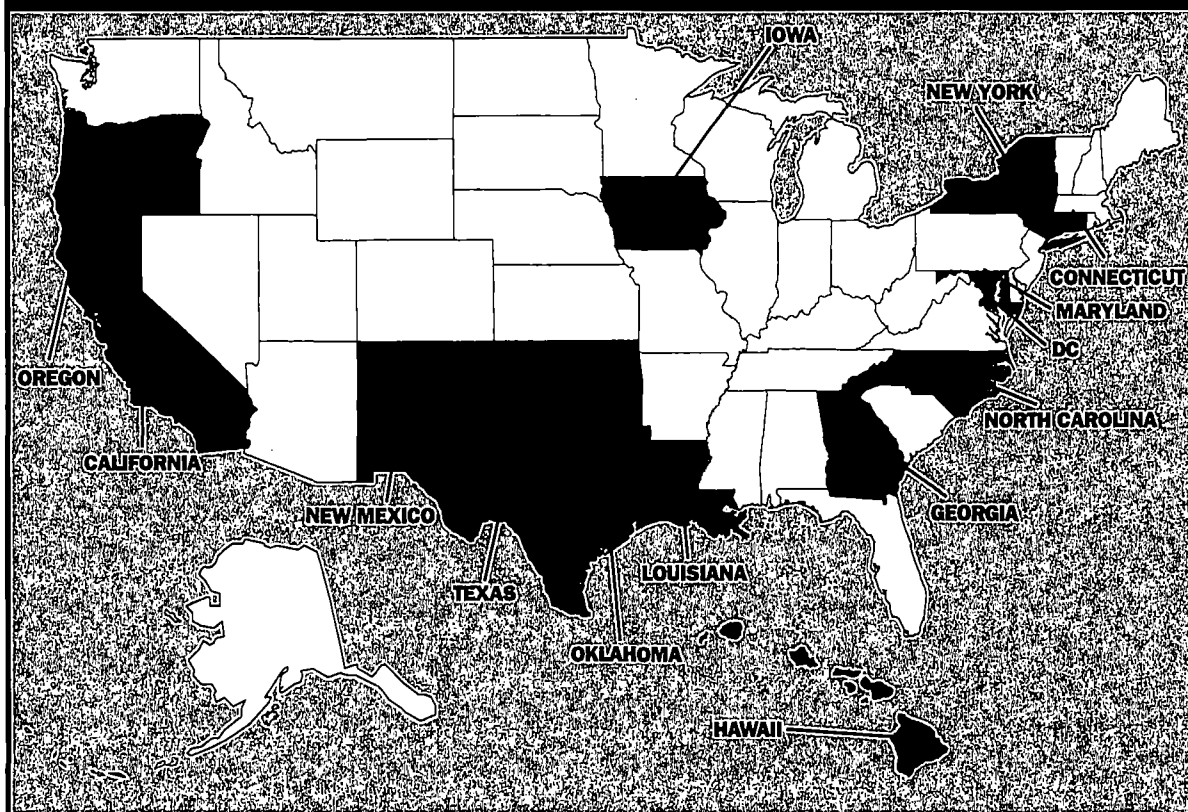
In many states across the country, individuals, organizations and coalitions of concerned citizens are working to strengthen seat belt and child passenger safety laws. One of the principle goals of **Buckle Up America** is to bring these people together in partnership at the state and community levels to deliver the kind of muscle and organizational power needed to support the legislative efforts that will significantly increase seat belt and child safety seat use.

Some **Buckle Up America** state partnerships might focus their legislative work on removing exemptions in current seat belt laws, or increasing fines or assessing penalty points for non-compliance. Still other **Buckle Up America** state partnerships might work to close the gaps in child passenger safety laws.

Of course, the most important step a state can take to realize significant, long-lasting increases in seat belt use is to adopt a strong primary seat belt law. Primary enforcement sends the message that saving lives is a priority. On average, states that have upgraded their laws from secondary to primary enforcement have seen a 15 percentage point increase in belt use.

To date, 13 states and the District of Columbia have enacted primary seat belt laws. With organized **Buckle Up America** partnerships working in state legislatures across the country, the number of primary seat belt laws is sure to increase.

STATES WITH PRIMARY SEAT BELT LAWS





PUBLIC SUPPORT OF PRIMARY LAWS

When asked whether they support primary (standard) enforcement laws – laws that give the police the authority to stop and ticket an unbuckled driver just as they do other routine violations of the law like littering or driving with a broken tail light – the public overwhelmingly supports stronger laws. (Source: Public Opinion Strategies, July 1997)

When they know that studies have shown that a majority of the time when the driver is unbuckled, children are unbuckled, 70% of the public believes everyone should buckle up. (Source: Public Opinion Strategies, July 1997)

State occupant protection laws are more complicated than you might think. States that passed secondary laws have actually made it more difficult for law enforcement to enforce these laws. Here is a description of the major differences in the laws.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Primary (Standard) Enforcement** – A seat belt citation can be written whenever a law enforcement officer observes an unbelted driver or passenger.
- **Secondary Enforcement** – A citation can only be written after a law enforcement officer stops the vehicle for another traffic violation.
- **“Gaps” in Child Passenger Safety Seat Laws** – Gaps in laws leave certain aged children vulnerable in certain seating positions. State laws should explicitly require all children to be in age- and size-appropriate child safety seats or seat belts, closing gaps and thus protecting all children in all seating positions.

IN NEW YORK STATE

New York was the first state to enact a primary seat belt law in 1984. As a result, seat belt use increased from 16 to 57 percent between 1985 and 1987. Today, seat belt use averages 74 percent statewide.

IN OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma Becomes A Primary Enforcement State

Before Oklahoma passed its primary enforcement law in May 1997, it had a 48 percent seat belt use rate and vocal opposition from civil libertarians. With passage, the state's leaders expect seat belt use to rise by an estimated 15 percentage points by the end of 1997. Supporters of Oklahoma's primary legislation created a targeted grassroots public information campaign. Supporters chose key legislative districts, flooded the community with seat belt awareness messages, and encouraged citizens to contact their legislators in support of the bill.

In spite of all the hard work, by April 1997, the media had proclaimed the primary seat belt bill finished for that legislative session. In the closing days of the session, the Oklahoma coalition encouraged the sponsor of the bill to give it one last push and they invited Carolyn Hanig, an EMT and Life Flight nurse from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, to testify before the committee hearing the bill. Carolyn's story turned the tide.

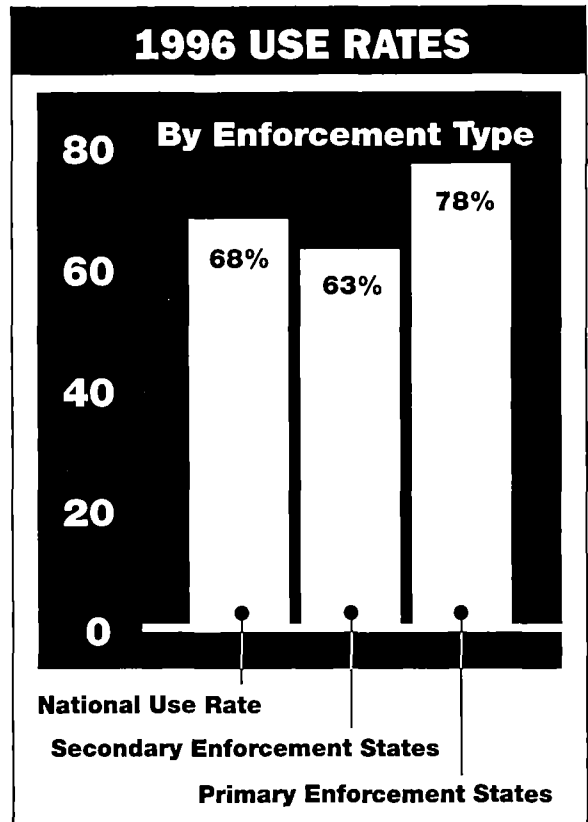


Carolyn and her Life Flight team answered a call to a devastating crash. As they landed, Carolyn learned that one of the fatally wounded victims was her 17-year-old son who was thrown from the vehicle. Even though she taught him to always wear his seat belt, he was unbelted. Carolyn Hanig believes that if Oklahoma had a primary law at the time, her son would be alive today. Her story provided the campaign the impetus it needed to pass the bill. Less than one month later, Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating signed the bill into law.

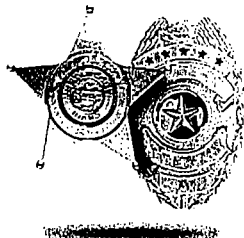


KEY PROVISIONS NEEDED IN EVERY STATE LAW

- **Primary (standard) enforcement of seat belt laws** – Primary enforcement allows a police officer to issue a seat belt citation when the officer witnesses an unbelted driver or passenger.
- **Coverage of all occupants in all seating positions** – Many seat belt laws only cover front seat occupants while many child passenger safety laws only cover children up to age five. Together, these two requirements often lead to gaps in protection. These age and seating gaps must be closed.
- **Coverage of all vehicles** – Seat belt laws should apply to all passenger vehicle types – vans, cars and light trucks – in every state.
- **Effective Penalties** – Fines for seat belt violations should be significant enough to promote compliance of the laws. In general, as the severity of the penalty increases, so will compliance.
- **Penalty Points** – To reach the highest use rates, penalty points should be assessed to drivers' license records.



Actions That Make a Difference



High Visibility Enforcement

High visibility enforcement means using stepped up enforcement, such as safety checkpoints or other enforcement strategies, in coordination with an earned or paid media campaign supporting the enforcement effort. When people in the community understand that law enforcement is serious about enforcing occupant protection laws – and actually witness officers enforcing those laws – they are more likely to buckle up and buckle up their children. Many part-time and non-belt users fear getting a ticket and a fine significantly more than they do being injured or killed unbelted in a crash.

Members of **Buckle Up America** partnerships can help law enforcement in their efforts to develop enforcement programs that are both effective and visible. It might mean assisting them with safety checkpoints, promoting enforcement activities, or donating merchandise or coupons that law enforcement officers could distribute to properly buckled occupants.

In those states and communities that have implemented high visibility enforcement programs, seat belt use rates have increased dramatically. By implementing new high visibility enforcement programs across the country, and calling on all **Buckle Up America** partners to support law enforcement, more adults and children will get buckled up.

Saved by Enforcement

On March 26, 1997, Susan Lambert became a thankful believer in strong enforcement. If it were not for the commitment of a Texas police officer, Susan could have lost her two-year-old son, Brandon.

On that Wednesday morning, when Susan swerved to avoid another car in her lane, her car slid off the side of the road, rolling over several times. Thankfully, both Susan and Brandon survived.

Two months prior to her crash, Officer Robert Hay did his job - he gave her a ticket for not having her son, Brandon, properly restrained. From that point on, Susan never again allowed Brandon to travel in the car unrestrained. That one ticket was the only lesson she needed.



"There has not been a day since our accident that I have not thanked God and you for giving me that ticket," she said in a letter to Officer Hay. "I am absolutely certain that if he [Brandon] had not been buckled up in his car seat, he would have been killed."

Now, Susan is a big believer and an advocate for enforcement of the primary seat belt law. "I definitely support primary seat belt laws. I can't understand why more states have not enacted these laws," she said.



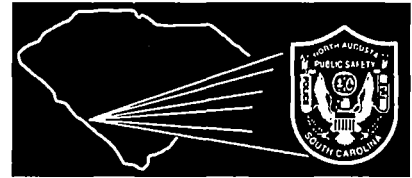
YOU CAN ASSIST LAW ENFORCEMENT

- **Buckle Up America** partners can publicly support enforcement efforts and educate their constituencies on the importance of correct, full-time seat belt and child safety seat use.
- Organizations can write letters to their political leaders and to newspapers in support of stepped up enforcement efforts.
- Businesses can provide rewards and incentives to law enforcement, like discount coupons, to distribute to properly buckled occupants.
- Local partnerships can enlist the leadership and participation of mayors, councils, boards and other public officials to support traffic enforcement as one of the best investments in public safety for their community.
- Recognize your law enforcement agency's efforts to help protect citizens by enforcing the seat belt and child safety seat laws.

Regardless of whether your state has primary or secondary enforcement laws, high visibility enforcement programs work to increase seat belt use and save lives and dollars.

Enforcement in a Secondary State

North Augusta, South Carolina has a population of 18,000 and encompasses 18 square miles. Even though South Carolina has a secondary enforcement law, law enforcement officials place a high priority on compliance of seat belt and child passenger safety laws. In 1992, seat belt use was at 58 percent. Since then, they have implemented a three-pronged plan to increase belt use and save lives. The plan instructed officers to:



- Educate the community through safety presentations;
- Inform the public about upcoming enforcement blitzes;
- Conduct periodic waves of stepped up enforcement, including checkpoints; and
- Report increases in belt use after enforcement activities.

The results have been extraordinary. At the end of 1996, the North Augusta law enforcement agency had driven seat belt usage up to 92 percent (up a total of 34 points) for the city.

Enforcement in a Primary State

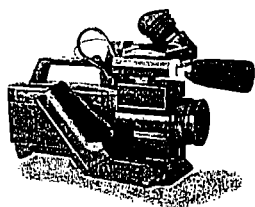
North Carolina enacted its primary enforcement law in 1985. In 1993, North Carolina launched *Click It or Ticket*, a high visibility, multi-jurisdictional enforcement campaign. By coupling statewide checkpoints with publicity highlighting the enforcement efforts, *Click It or Ticket* has proven an incredible success:



- Statewide belt use increased from 65 to 81 percent in the first six months alone.
- In that period, the program is credited with saving 45 lives, preventing 320 disabling injuries, and saving North Carolina taxpayers more than \$51 million in health care and other related costs.

Plus, the \$25 fine for failing to wear a seat belt goes directly to local schools. As a result, *Click It or Ticket* has provided *more than three million dollars* to local school districts.

Actions That Make a Difference



Working With the Media

Publicity is vital to the success of **Buckle Up America** efforts. Neither community events nor enforcement alone will generate the level of public exposure necessary to reach the entire community unless you promote them. Working with the media, the impact of **Buckle Up America** will extend far beyond the actual contacts made during an event.

EARNED MEDIA

The most efficient and cost effective way to reach a large audience is through “earned media.” Earned media is positive press you actively work to get. By creating newsworthy stories or events, you can generate effective media coverage that targets specific audiences. Earned media is a powerful tool in spreading the word about **Buckle Up America**.

KEY MESSAGES

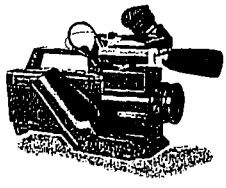
Your **Buckle Up America** campaign should communicate to the media that increasing seat belt use needs to be a priority. Specifically, explain how every individual pays when people ride unbuckled. Incorporate local seat belt use rates into your media messages and calculate the savings your community would enjoy if everyone were to ride buckled up. Stress that even the reporters who are covering the stories are personally affected by unbuckled drivers and passengers.

Always remember the key persuasive arguments: unbuckled occupants are a threat to our children; unbuckled crash victims cost all of us money; law enforcement officers are enforcing the state’s occupant protection laws; and everyone has a role to play in buckling up America. These are the main points that should be highlighted whenever your campaign delivers messages to the media.

GENERATING ATTENTION

There are numerous activities you can do to generate media attention. Among them are:

- Stage press events.
- Distribute press advisories and releases.
- Send letters-to-the-editor to your state and local newspapers.
- Write opinion-editorials for your state and local newspapers.
- Call radio talk shows that cover public safety issues.
- Schedule editorial board meetings with state and local newspapers.
- Offer public service announcements (PSAs) script copy to radio and television stations.
- Develop relevant programming for your local cable network.



MAKING YOUR NEWS “NEWSWORTHY”

Most people need to see a single media message at least three separate times before they can recall having seen the message at all. Repeated messages through different media channels are the most effective way to build public awareness for **Buckle Up America**. In order to keep your state or local **Buckle Up America** efforts “newsworthy” to reporters, editors and news programmers, develop a “news sense.” “News sense” means determining what kinds of stories the local outlets cover and how **Buckle Up America** can continue to be relevant to the media. You will want to make your information as current and timely as possible. Here are some ideas to help generate media coverage and keep **Buckle Up America** in the spotlight.

- **Develop relationships with media professionals** – Get to know the reporters that cover feature, traffic, public safety, metro, legislation, children and police beats. Keep them up to date on **Buckle Up America** events and accomplishments.
- **Become a source** – Work with your **Buckle Up America** spokesperson so he or she understands the messages and goals of **Buckle Up America** thoroughly. Then offer the spokesperson as a source to reporters who need information and quotes when covering seat belt-related stories or crashes. Make sure reporters mention in their stories whether a crash victim was wearing a seat belt.
- **Use your campaign partners as media resources** – National organizations, businesses and many advocacy groups have press offices or press personnel. Work with them to generate maximum coverage for **Buckle Up America**.
- **Keep the media informed** – Let members of the media know about **Buckle Up America** goals, activities and progress.
- **Invite the media to become campaign partners** – Give media outlets and professionals an invitation to join in **Buckle Up America** efforts. The more information the media has on seat belts, the better. Some local television and radio stations might partner with you as a public service. Ask these media outlets to sponsor **Buckle Up America** activities such as safety events, and to make announcements around high-traffic holidays – when the media routinely covers traffic stories.
- **Promote partnerships and activities to the media** – Let the media know when a new member or organization has joined the **Buckle Up America** ranks.
- **Hold events** – The media likes to cover events that provide good visuals to their stories. Hold a press conference, safety clinic or enforcement checkpoint and invite the media to cover the event.

WHAT THE MEDIA CAN DO

- Join the **Buckle Up America** partnership in your community.
- Implement seat belt use policies and programs for their employees and their employees’ families.
- Help educate the public on the benefits of proper, full-time seat belt and child safety seat use and the consequences of non-use.
- Publicize state and community seat belt and child passenger safety enforcement efforts.
- Indicate in stories about crashes whether seat belts and child safety seats were properly used.
- Request that all major television and radio networks develop and implement effective policies for reporting and illustrating seat belt and child safety seat use in news and entertainment programming.
- Establish periodic monitoring and reporting of media practices with recognition for exemplary performance.
- Serve on local task forces to assist in community efforts.
- Request that on-air traffic reports include seat belt and child safety seat messages during their on-going reporting.

Tools To Buckle Up America



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Sample Drop-in News Article

Chances are this year someone you know will be involved in a car crash. And if they are unbuckled, that person is 50 percent more likely to be injured or killed. For many people in recent years, increasing seat belt use has become less of a priority. But the simple fact is that wearing seat belts is the single most effective way to save lives and reduce injuries on America's roadways. And, according to **Buckle Up {State}**, a grassroots public-private coalition aimed at increasing seat belt and child safety seat use, it will also save you money.

We all pay for those who don't wear seat belts. The higher health care and higher insurance costs that result from unbelted drivers and passengers involved in crashes are passed along to all of us.

On average, inpatient hospital costs for an unbelted crash victim are 50 percent higher than those for a belted crash victim. Taxpayers bear 85 percent of those costs, not the individual drivers involved. Unbelted crash victims also drive up the costs for businesses. Crashes increase costs for health and disability insurance and increase workers' compensation expenses for employers.

Tragically, many of those who die will be children because automobile crashes are the leading cause of death to children. In America, fewer children are properly buckled up than adults. And in a 30 mile-per-hour crash, a child riding unrestrained is hit with a force equivalent to falling from a third story window.

And adults who don't buckle up are sending children a deadly message that it is all right not to use seat belts. Research shows that when a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children in that vehicle will not be buckled either.

Across the nation, **Buckle Up America** has begun to build grassroots coalitions to increase the seat belt use rate to 90 percent and reduce child fatalities by 25 percent by the year 2005 – saving the nation \$8.8 billion and preventing more than 5,500 deaths and 132,00 injuries annually.

Buckle Up America, a broad public-private partnership of community and health groups, safety advocates, businesses, legislators and other elected officials, law enforcement and concerned citizens, is mobilizing in this state and all across the nation to educate the public and increase belt use by strengthening laws and enforcement.

GET INVOLVED!

The local **Buckle Up America** campaign is urging everyone to help increase belt use. Here are a few things you can do to get involved:

1. Always make sure that everyone in your vehicle is buckled up.
2. Encourage your employer or employees to get involved by instituting a mandatory seat belt policy within your company.
3. Support community efforts to strengthen the enforcement of your local seat belt and child safety seat laws.

Sample Public Service Announcements

:15

Want to invest in a child's life? Wear your seat belt. Research shows that when a driver doesn't wear a seat belt, 70 percent of the time children in that car don't either. So please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:15

We all pay the price for unbuckled drivers and passengers... in higher taxes and higher health care and insurance costs. So please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Want to influence a child's life? Wear your seat belt. Research shows that when a driver doesn't wear a seat belt, 70 percent of the time the children in that car don't either. And, an unbuckled child is in danger. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Help us stop unbuckled adults from endangering children's lives. Support stronger enforcement of {STATE'S} seat belt and child passenger safety laws. And please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Want to influence a child's life? Wear your seat belt. Research shows that when a driver doesn't wear a seat belt, 70 percent of the time the children in that car don't either. And, an unbuckled child is in danger. Automobile crashes are the leading cause of death for children. Help us stop unbuckled adults from endangering children's lives. Support enactment of a primary seat belt law for {STATE}. And please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Unbuckled drivers and passengers are risking their lives... and they're costing you a fortune. Increasing the nation's seat belt use rate from 68 percent to 90 percent and reducing child fatalities by 25 percent would save taxpayers \$8.8 billion annually and save more than 5,500 lives. Unbuckled occupants waste lives and waste money. Help us stop them by supporting stronger enforcement of {STATE'S} seat belt and child passenger safety laws. And please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

Tools
To Buckle Up America



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:30

Unbuckled drivers and passengers are risking their lives... and they're costing you a fortune. Increasing the nation's seat belt use rate from 68 percent to 90 percent would save taxpayers \$8.8 billion annually and save more than 5,500 lives annually. Unbuckled occupants waste lives and waste money. Help us stop them by supporting enactment of a standard seat belt law in {STATE}. And please... **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

What protects children, saves lives and saves taxpayers millions? Buckling up. In fact, if every person in {STATE} just put on a seat belt, we would save the lives of more than {XX} children and adults next year alone. Plus, it would save taxpayers {\$XX} in health care and insurance costs. So... **Buckle Up {STATE}** and support stronger enforcement of {STATE'S} seat belt law. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Want to invest in our community? Encourage everyone you know to wear a seat belt. If every person in {STATE} just put on a seat belt, every year we would save more than {XX} lives and would save state taxpayers more than {\$XX} in health care and insurance costs. We all pay the price for unbuckled drivers and passengers. Support efforts to **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose if we don't. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Hi, I'm Officer {NAME} of the {STATE/LOCAL} police department. Too often I've seen the tragedy of adults and children seriously injured or killed in automobile crashes simply because they weren't belted. I've seen the devastating effect it has on families and on the community. We can prevent these senseless deaths. That's why law enforcement across {STATE/CITY} are out, right now, enforcing {STATE'S} seat belt and child passenger safety laws. No warnings. No excuses. So do your job or I'll do mine. Buckle up on each and every car ride and make sure your kids do too. **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

:30

Hi, I'm Officer {NAME} of the {STATE/LOCAL} police department with a safety tip we can all live with. It's simple... wear your seat belt. Every year I see too many people get seriously injured or killed in automobile crashes. In fact, crashes are the leading cause of death for children. I'm working hard to prevent these senseless deaths... but I need your help. Support the enactment of a primary seat belt law and give me the tools to protect everyone. So **Buckle Up {STATE}**. There's just too much to lose. This has been a public service announcement brought to you by _____ and **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

TWO-COLOR LOGO

Prints 100% PMS 293

Prints 100% PMS 485

Black and White
Logo



TWO-COLOR LOGO

Prints 100% PMS 293



Prints 100% PMS 485





Taking Inventory of Your State

Each state is unique, unique in its seat belt and child restraint law provisions, in the level and focus of its public education efforts regarding the laws, and in the level of enforcement of those laws. States are also unique in the public and political will to increase seat belt use. Therefore, your **Buckle Up America** campaign must be tailored to address your state's circumstances.

That means that the first step in framing your state's goals is to develop a statewide inventory. Only then can you create a strategy that will move towards goals you set on the state level, thereby contributing to the effort to reach 90 percent national seat belt use by the year 2005.

The following table provides guidance in developing your state inventory. Because each state is unique, these questions and actions are intended as a starting point in assessing your state.

	Questions to Ask	What to Look For	Actions That Make a Difference
Public Education	• What is the level of public awareness of the state's seat belt laws? • How is the public made aware of the seat belt laws and enforcement efforts in the state? • Is there an active public education campaign for increased seat belt and child restraint use in the state? • What is the public attitude toward stronger seat belt laws and enforcement efforts? • What is the public attitude toward child passenger safety seat use and enforcement of child restraint laws?	• Number and quality of editorial and opinion pieces in newspapers supporting seat belt and child restraint use and enforcement of belt laws. • Number of public service announcements on television, radio, and in newspapers and periodicals within the state. • Number and distribution of events targeting seat belt use, such as safety displays at shopping centers, child seat clinics, etc. • Examples of public outrage (e.g., letters-to-the-editor of local newspapers) when reports of a crash reveal that occupants were unbuckled.	• Use ALL campaign partners to educate the public that unbuckled drivers and passengers cost all of us in lives lost and dollars spent. • Educate the public on the benefits of highly visible enforcement of the laws as a method to ensure public safety, especially for children who cannot protect themselves. • Lead by example: make sure that, on every trip, in all vehicles, everyone is properly buckled up. Spread the word that we all pay the price for unbuckled drivers and passengers.
Legislation	• What are the strengths of the state's existing seat belt law? • What are the strengths of the existing child restraint laws? • Are there specific weaknesses to the seat belt or child restraint laws? • Are the penalties for being unbuckled significant enough to deter non-compliance with the law? • What is the political climate in the state? Are public and traffic safety issues being considered in the legislature? In the executive branch of the state's government?	• Primary (standard) or secondary laws for seat belt violations. • Laws that apply to all seating positions. • Gaps in the law that allow children, up to age 18, to be unrestrained when riding in the back seat of a vehicle. • Laws that apply to all motor vehicles (e.g., cars, vans, light trucks, sport utility vehicles).	• Work for passage of a primary enforcement law for all occupants. • Close gaps in coverage for all ages and seating positions for children. • Work for a seat belt law that requires compliance in all vehicles - vans, light trucks sport utility vehicles, and cars. • Work to make fines for seat belt and child restraint violations strong enough to deter non-compliance with the law. (Studies show that fines greater than \$25 lead to higher seat belt use rates.)



Legislation, cont.

Questions to

What to Look For

Actions That Make a Difference

- What is the political will to pass stronger seat belt laws?
- Has the state legislature considered a primary seat belt law before? What were the circumstances that prevented the bill from becoming law?
- Who were the strong proponents? Opponents? Who are they now?

- Sufficiently stringent fines or penalty point assessments for non-compliance with the seat belt laws.

- Work with your campaign's legislative partners (the health care and medical communities, law enforcement, etc.) to inform lawmakers about the lifesaving and cost saving benefits of primary enforcement laws.
- Involve all campaign partners to advocate for passage of primary enforcement laws to save both lives and taxpayer money in the state.

Enforcement

- What are the methods of the state's seat belt law enforcement effort?
- Have these law enforcement methods been successful in increasing seat belt and child restraint use in the state?
- What is the public's reaction to high visibility enforcement of seat belt and child restraint laws?
- Do the state or local law enforcement agencies have and enforce seat belt policies for their personnel?
- What priority does the state's court system place on seat belt and child restraint violations?
- Do the courts properly and adequately report seat belt and child restraint violations to the state's department of motor vehicles (DMV)?

- Number of citations (per agency) written in the last year for seat belt and child restraint violations.
- Ratio of seat belt and child restraint citations to other moving citations per agency for the last year.
- Number and type of specific high visibility enforcement efforts, such as enforcement checkpoints.
- Number and type of enforcement public information and education activities conducted by law enforcement agencies.
- Seat belt policies for law enforcement agency personnel.
- Court data on:
 - number and percent of convictions of seat belt and child restraint law violations
 - number and percent of dismissals for seat belt and child restraint law violations
 - frequency of waivers, of fines or penalty points of seat belt and child restraint law violators.
- Court costs assessed in addition to the fines for belt law and child restraint violations.

- Encourage your local law enforcement agency to set the example by implementing and enforcing a seat belt policy for agency personnel.
- Encourage law enforcement to cite belt law and child restraint violators as often as they write tickets for other traffic violations.
- Involve campaign partners in law enforcement's efforts to promote the laws and deliver the enforcement message.
- Have non-law enforcement partners participate with officers at safety enforcement checkpoints - acknowledging belt and child restraint users for adhering to the law and talking to violators about the dangers of being unbuckled.
- Generate campaign partnerships within the legal community to help patrol the system - ensuring that fines and penalties are significant enough to deter people from riding unbuckled, and they are not waived on a regular basis by the courts.
- Work with your campaign's legal community partners to help them report seat belt and child restraint violations for use in public information materials.

Sample Partner Letter

{Local Campaign Stationery}

{DATE}
{NAME}
{TITLE}
{COMPANY/ASSOCIATION}
{ADDRESS}
{CITY, STATE ZIP CODE}

Dear {NAME},

Every hour someone dies in America simply because he or she did not buckle up. Sadly, failure to buckle up still contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior.

Research shows that those who do not buckle up are sending children a deadly message that it is all right not to wear a seat belt. If a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children in that vehicle won't be buckled either.

And the costs go beyond those killed and the loss to their families. Everyone pays for those who don't buckle up – in higher taxes, higher health care and higher insurance costs.

Community and health groups, safety advocates, legislators and other elected officials, law enforcement, businesses and concerned citizens are working to address this issue here and in states all across the nation. They are calling for stronger laws and enforcement and more public education to promote greater seat belt use to save lives and dollars.

I am writing to urge you and {COMPANY/ASSOCIATION} to join us in this lifesaving effort to **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

Nationally, this campaign is focused on two goals – to increase national seat belt use to 90 percent and to reduce child occupant fatalities 25 percent by the year 2005.

Locally, we are working to {INSERT LOCAL STATISTICS HERE}.

The **Buckle Up {STATE}** campaign would serve {COMPANY/ASSOCIATION} by {PERSONALIZE ACCOUNT OF WHAT THEY COULD GET FROM JOINING THE CAMPAIGN, I.E. PROVIDING A SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS, SAVING LIVES IN THE COMMUNITY, GENERATING MEDIA ATTENTION, WORKING WITH OTHER CAMPAIGN PARTNERS, ETC.}.

Enclosed are materials related to the campaign including general background information. I will be calling to follow up with you in the next few days, and look forward to discussing the campaign with you then. I hope you agree with me that the time has come to **Buckle Up {STATE}**.

Sincerely,

{NAME}
{TITLE}, **Buckle Up {STATE}**

Enclosures

Tools
To Buckle Up America



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Potential Community Partners

Following is a list of groups you might consider when building your local partnerships to **Buckle Up America**. Your inventory of needs and your state and local goals will better determine what your partnership will look like. But this list should give you a start.

State Government

Governor's Office
Highway Safety Office
Regulatory Commission
Department of Transportation
Department of Administration
Department of Health
Motor Vehicle Administration
Department of Public Safety
State Police/Highway Patrol Agency
Legislators

Local Government

Mayors
City council members
County executives
County boards
Traffic court judges
Traffic engineering departments
Municipal police departments
County sheriffs offices
Fire and rescue departments
City and county health departments

Educational Institutions

Administrators
Department heads
School bus supervisors and drivers
College and university faculty
Local school boards
District school boards

Business, Safety, Industry or Professional Organizations

Chambers of commerce
Local utility companies
Local leading industries
Insurance companies
Oil companies
Banking institutions
Automotive dealers
Shipping and transportation companies
Health professionals
Local mass transit boards
State affiliations of physicians'/nurses' associations
SAFE KIDS coalitions
State and local safety councils
Women highway safety leaders association
Mothers Against Drunk Driving local chapter
Students Against Drunk Driving local chapter
Remove Intoxicated Drivers local chapter
Youth highway safety leaders association
Citizens for Highway Safety
State Association of Chiefs of Police
National Sheriffs' Association state office
State Driver Education Association
American Automobile Association (AAA)
State and local highway safety groups
Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSPs)
Safe Communities programs
Highway Users Federation
American Marketing Association (AMA)
Professional sports teams
Child care providers

Tools
To Buckle Up America



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Men's or Women's Clubs and Service Organizations

Local Red Cross chapter
Jaycees
Rotary Clubs
Lions Clubs
Kiwanas International
American Legion post
Veterans of Foreign Wars post
National Extension Homemakers Council
Neighborhood associations
Sororities and fraternities

School and Parent - Teacher Groups

Public schools
Independent and parochial schools
Community service coordinators within schools
Parent Teacher Associations

Youth Groups

Boy Scouts
Girl Scouts
4-H
Future Homemakers of America/HERO
Boys and Girls clubs
Student councils

Recreational Organizations

YMCA
YWCA
Community centers
Health clubs
Sports clubs

Religious Organizations

Churches and synagogues
Clergy associations
Men's or women's religious groups

Media

Newspapers
Newsletters
Magazines
Radio
Television
Outdoor advertising
State high school newspaper association
High school and college journalism classes

Advertising/PR

Advertising agencies
Public relations agencies
Marketing agencies
Advertising clubs
Market research firms
Advertising specialty companies
Promotions companies

Questions & Answers

Question #1

Doesn't the state have more important priorities than to devote attention and resources to increasing seat belt use?

Answer

Traffic crashes are a leading threat to public health. Increasing seat belt use is still the single most effective and immediate way we can save lives and reduce injuries on America's roadways. Seat belts are estimated to save 9,500 lives in America each year. And those who don't buckle up are costing all of us in lost lives and money.

Question #2

Haven't public education campaigns done a good job at teaching the younger generation about seat belt safety? Don't we teach teenagers about seat belts and traffic crashes in drivers' education classes?

Answer

The facts show that education alone does not do the job for young people. Seat belt use declines from age five to about 25. For those at age 18, seat belt use is far below the national average. Why? Young people – especially young men ages 16 to 25 – simply do not believe they will be injured or killed. Yet, they are the nation's highest risk drivers, with more impaired driving, more speeding and more crashes. For this tough-to-reach group, stronger belt laws and enforcement work when neither education nor fear of death or injury do the job.

Question #3

Do we really need to make being unbuckled a primary (standard) offense in our state? Isn't a secondary law sufficient for unbuckled drivers and passengers?

Answer

Most everyone would agree that protecting lives with seat belts is at least as important as having a broken tail light or littering. And although most states have a primary law that allows law enforcement to stop and ticket a violator for having a broken tail light or for tossing trash out of a window, not all states have a primary law for seat belt use. Experience has shown that upgrading to a primary seat belt law results in up to a 15 percentage point increase in seat belt use statewide – an indicator that secondary laws alone are not sufficient.

In all 50 states, child passenger safety laws currently are primary laws and warrant high visibility enforcement.

Question #4

Would tougher seat belt laws and enforcement efforts really make a significant difference to the people of our state? Our nation?

Answer

{INSERT STATE-SPECIFIC STATISTICS}

If America increased seat belt use rate from the current 68 percent to 90 percent, and reduced child fatalities by 25 percent, we would prevent an estimated 5,536 fatalities and 132,670 injuries, and would save \$8.8 billion annually.

Tools
To Buckle Up America



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Question #5

Other people are not affected when drivers and passengers refuse to buckle up. Therefore, shouldn't it be a person's choice to wear a seat belt?

Answer

We all pay for the "personal freedom" of those who don't wear seat belts. The higher health care and higher insurance costs that result from unbuckled crash victims get passed along to everyone. For example, on average, the inpatient hospital care costs for an unbelted crash victim are 50 percent higher than those for a belted crash victim. And society bears 85 percent of those costs, not the individual drivers involved.

In our society, personal freedoms stop where others are injured or killed. This is especially true when it comes to children's safety as passengers in motor vehicles. A child unrestrained in a 30 mile-per-hour crash is like a child dropped from a third story window. Yet adults who don't buckle up are sending a deadly message to children that it's all right not to use seat belts. Research shows that when a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children in that vehicle will not be buckled either.

Question #6

Don't the police have more important work to be doing than patrolling for seat belt use? Shouldn't they be working to catch real criminals?

Answer

The fact is that an effective seat belt enforcement program – besides saving lives, reducing injury and saving taxpayers money – often leads to the apprehension and conviction of more serious violators. Police routinely pick up suspects for drunk driving, stolen property, drug violations and even fugitives from justice – all because traffic enforcement officers were on the job.

For example, during a routine traffic stop, an Oklahoma Highway Patrol Trooper arrested Timothy McVeigh for not having a license plate, speeding and not wearing his seat belt. It turned out that McVeigh was wanted in connection with the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City. Traffic enforcement really does support the war on crime!

Question #7

Won't enforcement of primary seat belt laws lead to an increase in police harassment of law-abiding citizens?

Answer

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African-American youth are 50 percent more likely to be unbelted than their white or Hispanic counterparts. This means African-American youth are being killed and seriously injured in greater numbers. It also means that effective seat belt laws can proportionately save more young African-American men and women.

Harassment is a serious issue, and it deserves serious attention. However, there is no evidence that shows that stronger laws and increased enforcement efforts lead to harassment.

In fact, there have been no reported incidents of minority harassment as a result of primary (standard) enforcement laws in any of the 13 states that have enacted these laws since 1984.

Tools To Buckle Up America



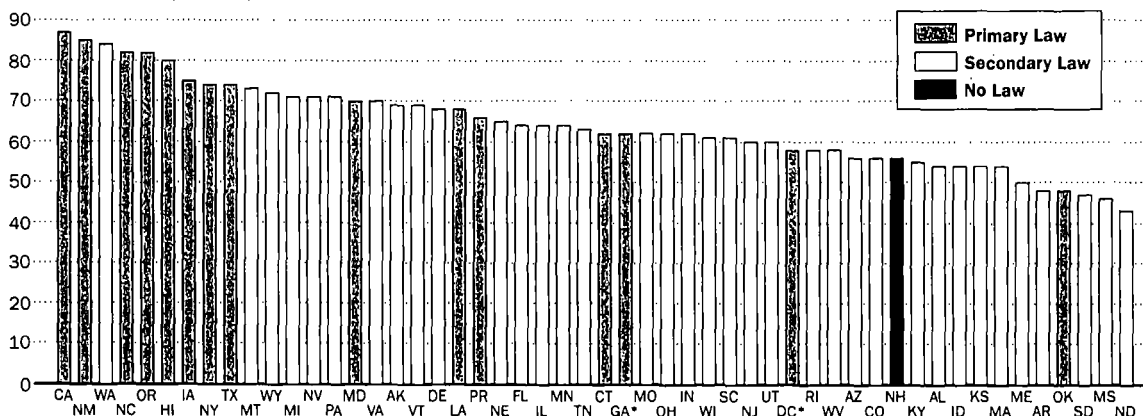
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Legislative Fact Sheet

- States with secondary enforcement average only 63 percent belt use. But states with primary (standard) enforcement belt laws average 78 percent belt use.
- Most everyone would agree that protecting lives with seat belts is at least as important as a broken tail light or littering. Yet, while virtually every state has standard laws that allow enforcement officers to stop and ticket a violator for having a broken tail light or for tossing trash out the window, most states currently do not have standard laws for seat belt use.
- Increasing the national seat belt use rate to 90 percent from the current 68 percent would prevent and estimated 5,536 fatalities, 132,670 injuries and save the nation \$8.8 billion annually.
- We all pay for those who do not wear seat belts. The higher health care and insurance costs that result from unbelted drivers and passengers involved in crashes get passed along to everyone. For example, the costs of hospital care for an unbelted driver are 50 percent higher than those for a driver who was wearing a safety belt. Society bears 85 percent of those costs, not the individuals involved.
- Some people see the choice to wear seat belts as a matter of "personal freedom." But in our society, personal freedoms stop where others are injured or killed. This is especially true when it comes to children's safety as passengers in a motor vehicle. A child unrestrained in a 30-mile-per-hour crash is like a child dropped from a third story window. Yet adults who do not buckle up are sending a message to our children it is all right not to use seat belts. Research shows that when a driver is unbuckled, 70 percent of the time children in that vehicle will not be buckled either.
- When asked whether they support primary enforcement laws – laws that give law enforcement the authority to stop and ticket an unbuckled occupant, just as they do other routine violations of the law like littering or driving with a broken tail light – the public overwhelmingly supports primary seat belt laws, 61 to 35 percent. (Source: Public Opinion Strategies, July 1997)
- When the public learns that a majority of the time when the driver is unbuckled, passengers in that vehicle – including children – are unbuckled, 70 percent support the statement that "It should be completely unacceptable for anyone to ride unbuckled in America." (Source: Public Opinion Strategies, July 1997)

State Seat Belt Use Rates by Law Type

1996 Use Rates (Percent)



*Primary Law in Georgia, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Washington, DC passed in 1996-97



ANNUAL BENEFITS OF UPGRADING FROM SECONDARY TO PRIMARY ENFORCEMENT LAWS

State	Deaths Prevented	Savings from Deaths Prevented	Injuries Prevented	Savings from Injuries Prevented	Total Savings
Alabama	87	\$56,727,219	1,326	\$36,177,726	\$92,904,945
Alaska	9	\$8,263,125	172	\$6,850,740	\$15,113,865
Arizona	58	\$39,811,026	1,370	\$41,520,024	\$81,331,050
Arkansas	43	\$26,560,111	563	\$14,562,376	\$41,122,487
Colorado	39	\$31,755,633	1,034	\$34,962,025	\$66,747,659
Delaware	12	\$10,221,636	242	\$27,237,218	\$37,458,854
Florida	158	\$124,863,450	4,109	\$133,676,442	\$258,439,892
Idaho	18	\$11,607,210	309	\$8,234,073	\$19,841,283
Illinois	107	\$93,280,460	3,634	\$132,564,951	\$225,844,511
Indiana	67	\$48,290,460	1,701	\$50,512,783	\$98,803,435
Kansas	35	\$27,128,255	872	\$29,292,340	\$56,420,595
Kentucky	59	\$38,375,901	1,464	\$38,044,152	\$76,420,053
Maine	13	\$9,421,778	420	\$11,933,084	\$21,354,860
Massachusetts	27	\$25,889,706	1,408	\$51,622,648	\$77,512,654
Michigan	94	\$73,534,696	2,961	\$94,787,702	\$168,322,398
Minnesota	48	\$38,393,472	1,251	\$41,189,900	\$79,583,372
Mississippi	49	\$27,368,754	687	\$14,813,124	\$42,181,878
Missouri	83	\$62,011,375	1,732	\$56,406,788	\$118,418,163
Montana	15	\$10,080,195	190	\$5,620,242	\$15,700,437
Nebraska	20	\$14,958,500	581	\$17,062,023	\$32,020,523
Nevada	20	\$16,061,200	365	\$12,613,759	\$28,674,959
New Jersey	52	\$55,263,312	3,062	\$136,401,283	\$191,664,595
North Dakota	5	\$3,368,060	109	\$2,879,412	\$6,247,472
Ohio	112	\$84,036,064	4,789	\$213,805,405	\$297,841,469
Pennsylvania	120	\$96,079,560	3,213	\$107,097,250	\$203,176,810
Rhode Island	4	\$3,154,708	201	\$6,053,467	\$9,208,175
South Carolina	59	\$38,092,996	1,036	\$27,402,615	\$65,495,611
South Dakota	11	\$7,550,367	196	\$5,363,696	\$12,914,063
Tennessee	100	\$68,320,000	2,104	\$59,760,548	\$128,080,548
Utah	18	\$10,945,584	484	\$12,194,047	\$23,139,631
Vermont	8	\$5,945,040	163	\$4,939,380	\$10,884,420
Virginia	81	\$67,766,301	1,893	\$68,773,721	\$136,540,022
Washington	4	\$3,256,988	119	\$4,243,799	\$7,500,787
West Virginia	31	\$18,404,855	694	\$16,205,858	\$34,610,713
Wisconsin	56	\$42,331,240	1,465	\$45,994,524	\$88,325,764
Wyoming	11	\$7,884,371	133	\$4,246,194	\$12,132,565
Total	1,736	\$1,307,003,798	46,025	\$1,574,906,420	\$2,881,910,218

*Numbers do not include the U.S. territories. **Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration