



ERIE ACTION NETWORK

CONNECTING MATTERS

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The Issue: Road and Vehicle Safety

BACKGROUND: The property casualty insurance industry values safety for all road users. We support inclusion of several federal, state, and community-based road and vehicle safety efforts in the base House and Senate infrastructure bills this year. Several of these provisions were included in the infrastructure bills considered in the 116th Congress (S. 2302 and H.R. 2). Key safety groups including AAA, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Governors Highway Safety Association, and the National Safety Council join APCIA in also supporting:

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) should be revised to direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to publish a biannual report assessing safety vulnerabilities and identifying “hot spots” that place pedestrians and bicyclists at risk; require states to develop programs and projects to reduce safety risks and address existing identified safety issues; provide increased support for pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

National Priority Safety Programs grants for driver safety education, data collection, alcohol interlock programs, and distracted driving safety issues. These efforts mitigate alcohol-impaired driving and deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes.

Research on Causal Factors of Auto Crashes: NHTSA’s National Motor Vehicle Crash Causation Survey (NMVCCS) data is widely used to illustrate the underlying reasons for crashes on the nation’s roadways. The most recent survey data was published in 2008. The NMVCCS should be updated to account for significant developments in personal and vehicle related technology. **Note: Not included in either prior bill.*

Advanced Driver-Assistance Systems (ADAS) Technology for 21st Century Smart Cars: Consumers want safer vehicles, and a wide variety of safety components and designs are available in the marketplace. Industry-to-consumer uniformity in ADAS terminology used and minimum ADAS performance standards will improve utilization and effectiveness of these valuable lifesaving components.

Updates to the New Car Assessment Program (NCAP): Now used internationally, NCAP provides consumers with simple and direct vehicle safety assessments. Including a biannual roadmap detailing program improvements will help consumers keep pace with new technology and improved safety features.

Traffic Safety Enforcement Grants allow for the deployment countermeasures that fit the location and hazards that circumstances present, such as roundabouts, “all direction” red lights, center-line alerts, and pedestrian crossing improvements. These help to reduce the number of vehicle related crash deaths in the United States.

Complete and Context Sensitive Street Design is a Department of Transportation (DOT) program that incorporates community context street design and offers a tailored approach to transportation safety, inclusive of all road users including vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and mobility impaired. Improved roadway design planning will enhance community safety and livability. Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN) and Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) have introduced related legislation (H.R. 1289 and S. 425)

Supported by: Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Road to Zero Coalition

Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS) promotes walking and bicycling to school through a holistic approach to infrastructure improvements, crash mitigation, and safety education, resulting in a 33 percent decrease in the rate of pedestrian injury among school age children. An expansion of the program to cover children through the 12th grade will further protect students going to and from school.

Rail Crossing Safety Devices incentivize participation in rural locations where railway-highway crossings are often located, DOT must address current confusion regarding federal and local matching contributions required for the Railway-Highway Crossings Program. The program must also further incentivize local officials to support closure of railway-highway grade crossings and offer funding for the replacement of obsolete warning devices. Proposed changes to Railway-Highway Crossings Program will address these issues to continue to improve safety at railway-highway crossings moving forward.

Surety: Bonding infrastructure investments for payment and performance protects small businesses and taxpayer resources. Rep. Steven Lynch (D-MA) and Rep. Troy Balderson (R-OH) have introduced H.R. 1641, to ensure payment and performance bonds are required for the growing number of public/private infrastructure partnerships. Bonding requires a rigorous prequalification process intended to mitigate the financial risk in these large and complex transactions.

Our Position: Congress should support inclusion of these sound federal, state, and community-based road and auto safety provisions in any surface transportation reauthorization bill this year.