

TODAY: News conference and live Webcast –

Each state to receive report card grading their progress in passing model traffic safety laws.

Highway safety advocates to launch congressional effort to prod states to enact low-dollar, high-results solutions to cut annual 41,000 deaths and \$230 billion economic losses.

WHAT: As state legislatures across the nation open their 2009 sessions, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety will hold a news conference to unveil its “2009 ROADMAP TO STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY LAWS” report grading each state and the District of Columbia on their passage of model traffic safety laws related to teen driving, drunk driving and the required use of seat belts, child booster seats, and motorcycle helmets.

The report will feature the best and worst performing states, states that have made the most and least progress, dangerous legal loopholes in each state that contribute to needless death and injury, and state-specific data on deaths, injuries and related economic losses.

In addition, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety will announce a new congressional initiative to spark nationwide uniform legislative action to save lives on our roadways. Over the past decade, an average of 115 people were killed and 7000 were injured every day in traffic crashes at a daily economic cost of \$630 million.

WHEN: TODAY – Monday, January 12, 2009, at 12:15pm Eastern Time

WHERE: National Press Club (Zenger Room), 529 14th St, NW (13th Floor), Washington, DC

WEBCAST: A free live WEBCAST of the news conference and an ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT will be available at: www.saferoads.org. Reporters will be able to email questions.

WHO: JUDITH LEE STONE (President) and JACQUELINE GILLAN (Vice President) of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, an alliance of consumer, medical, safety and insurance organizations that advances state and federal highway and vehicle safety laws, programs and policies.

PATTY FRENCH, a Fredericksburg, Virginia, mom who has been fighting for passage of a primary enforcement seat belt law in Virginia since her son Greg, age 23, died at Christmas 1994 following a 3-1/2 year coma resulting from injuries in a car crash in which he was not buckled up. After repeated tries, the Virginia legislature has failed to pass this lifesaving law.

CAPTAIN TOM DIDONE, a Montgomery County (Maryland) Police Department district commander and long-time highway safety law enforcement leader whose son Ryan, age 15, was killed October 20, 2008, as a passenger in a car driven by a newly-licensed 17-year-old classmate.

ASSISTANT POLICE CHIEF PATRICK BURKE, Metropolitan Police Department (Washington, DC), who is the leading voice for traffic safety laws and their enforcement in the nation's capital.

DR. LINDA DEGUTIS, DrPH, MSN (New Haven, CT): Immediate Past President of the American Public Health Association, Board Member of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, and Associate Professor of Surgery and Public Health at Yale University, whose work has focused on injury prevention and control as a means to save lives and cut health care costs.

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