



States graded on highway safety

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 18 (UPI) -- Most U.S. states are getting only a fair grade when it comes to taking steps against death on the highway, a study says.

The annual study released by the **Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety** graded each state on the enactment of 15 new laws to lessen the number of highway deaths.

Most states were given average grades since not one has adopted all 15 new laws, which include seat belt, booster seat, and motorcycle helmet use, and a combined 25 new laws were enacted by the states in 2007, leaving 324 potentially lethal loopholes that should be fixed in 2008, a release from AHAS said.

The 2008 Roadmap to State Highway Safety Laws aims to reduce the leading cause of death in Americans aged 4 to 34, which is traffic crashes.

More than 42,000 people were killed in traffic related accidents in 2006 and another 2.5 million were injured.

"More than half of those killed were unbuckled and the number of motorcycle rider deaths continued to climb for the ninth consecutive year," said AHAS President **Judith Lee**. "At the same time, fatalities involving teen motorists and drunk driver didn't budge. We can and must do better, starting with the strong foundation of proven effective laws."

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