



INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

Date: November 24, 2008
From: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
To: US Department of Transportation transition team
Re: Four priorities

One: Research is key to developing sound federal motor vehicle safety standards and highway safety programs, and NHTSA needs to conduct more research on the subjects listed below.

- injury biomechanics, especially in relation to children
- injury mechanisms in crashes; this will require more crash investigations by NASS teams, which originally were supposed to cover 75 locations nationwide but now cover only 24 locations
- crashworthiness of future vehicles, in particular identification of the types of crashes in which people still are dying and development of new tests to reduce injuries in such crashes
- crash avoidance technology evaluations based on real-world crash data and public acceptance of the technology
- alcohol ignition interlocks (continue to seek promising technology)
- in-truck technology to detect fatigue among drivers of big rigs; this is especially important because of FMCSA's failure to adopt adequate hours-of-service requirements for commercial drivers

Two: Twenty-three percent of passenger vehicle occupant deaths in 2007 occurred in collisions with large trucks. To address this problem of incompatibility between large trucks and other vehicles on the road, NHTSA should require tractors and trailers to have adequate front, side, and rear underride protection.

Three: NHTSA and FHWA should encourage states to implement proven programs to reduce crash frequency and severity. Four proven programs are listed below.

- red light cameras
- speed cameras
- alcohol checkpoints using passive alcohol sensors
- driver licensing at 17 or 18 instead of 16 or younger

Four: While NHTSA's primary mission involves public health, the agency has long been ignoring its mission of reducing the expensive property damage that occurs in low-speed crashes. Because such damage imposes significant economic costs on consumers, NHTSA should require adequate bumpers on all vehicles.