

**HB**

**213**

THE  
FOLLOWING  
DOCUMENT(S)  
ARE  
POOR  
ORIGINAL  
COPIES

# SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 3/5/04

FURTHER: Finance

DATE TURNED  
IN TO OFFICE: 3/31/04

State Affairs Committee considered CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 213(FIN)

## HB 213 PROVISIONAL DRIVER'S LICENSE

"An Act relating to a provisional driver's license and to issuance of a driver's license; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- adopt previous \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by \_\_\_\_\_ Committee
- further referral to \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Senate Bill:</b>      |                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Same Title               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New Title                |
| <b>House Bill:</b>       |                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Same Title               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Technical Title Change   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New Title w/ SCR # _____ |

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

| Department | Date | Fiscal | Zero | Indet. | FN# |
|------------|------|--------|------|--------|-----|
|            |      |        |      |        |     |
|            |      |        |      |        |     |
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**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):**

| Department | Date    | Fiscal | Zero | Indet. | FN# |
|------------|---------|--------|------|--------|-----|
| SOA        | 1/20/04 | ✓      |      |        | 1   |
|            |         |        |      |        |     |
|            |         |        |      |        |     |
|            |         |        |      |        |     |
|            |         |        |      |        |     |

APPROPRIATION - no fiscal note

| SIGNATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS: | Do PASS | Do NOT PASS | NO REC | AMEND |
|---------------------------------|---------|-------------|--------|-------|
| <i>John A. Casady</i>           | ✓       |             |        |       |
| <i>Robert A. ...</i>            |         |             | ✓      |       |
| <i>Paul ...</i>                 |         |             | ✓      |       |
|                                 |         |             |        |       |
|                                 |         |             |        |       |
| CHAIR: <i>[Signature]</i>       | x       |             |        |       |

# address teenage risk, but enforcement is key

## Monitor your teen's driving

SafeForce, which monitors driving performance of emergency vehicle operators, has been redesigned to help parents keep teen drivers safe. Here's how the black box works:

- ▶ The box monitors seat belt use, engine speed, tire traction and other parameters.
- ▶ Second-by-second information is recorded on a flash memory card.
- ▶ When the driver exceeds preset limits for speed, braking or sharp turns, the box grows first, then beeps that a violation has been recorded. The audible cues help drivers learn to drive within safe limits.
- ▶ Back home, when the flash memory card is put into the home computer, parents can see how their teen has been driving in recent days.

Source: RoadSafety

tour. The family version uses a flash memory card — the postage-stamp-sized memory card that drives everything from digital cameras to handheld organizers — to record the data in the car. It must be carried inside and plugged into an inexpensive reader on the family PC. Otherwise, the devices are nearly identical.

"This is something that every car should have," says Janice Manzer of Camarillo. By word of mouth, she managed to get a prototype of the box in her 17-year-old son's car after he had an accident in the school parking lot and got a speeding ticket on a city street. "It's like having a babysitter in the car."

The early results from the device's recordings have been eye-popping for parents.

The box showed that Mallory Gompert — both smart and polite as she addresses a reporter — had a lead foot. She routinely cruised in the family's Ford Explorer at more than

80 mph, and she took turns dangerously fast. She had no idea, she says, that she was over the limit. Neither, of course, did her parents.

"I used to dread it when my dad would come home with his PC and say, 'Let's see how your driving is,'" Mallory says.

"She said, 'My life is terrible,'" her mother Donna recalls. "Why does Dad have to work for Road Safety? I hate my life!"

Now she likes the way the box reminds her to pay attention when she "spaces out." Because of her improved driving, she says, other parents ask her to drive their kids,

## Deaths vary widely by state

Nationwide, 2,778 drivers age 19 and under died in motor vehicle crashes in 2000. That's out of 9,743,519 total drivers — a rate of 2.9 per 10,000 licensed drivers.

A ranking of states based on the rate of deaths per 10,000 drivers 19 and younger in 2000:

| State                | Deaths |
|----------------------|--------|
| Alaska               | 6.0    |
| Kentucky             | 5.2    |
| Mississippi          | 4.9    |
| Delaware             | 4.6    |
| Missouri             | 4.3    |
| North Carolina       | 4.1    |
| Tennessee            | 3.8    |
| Iowa                 | 3.8    |
| Louisiana            | 3.8    |
| Alabama              | 3.7    |
| Kansas               | 3.7    |
| Montana              | 3.7    |
| Arkansas             | 3.6    |
| Oklahoma             | 3.6    |
| Vermont              | 3.6    |
| Wyoming              | 3.5    |
| Georgia              | 3.3    |
| Virginia             | 3.3    |
| Pennsylvania         | 3.3    |
| Texas                | 3.2    |
| New Mexico           | 3.2    |
| Idaho                | 3.1    |
| Maryland             | 3.0    |
| Indiana              | 3.0    |
| Nebraska             | 3.0    |
| Florida              | 2.9    |
| District of Columbia | 2.7    |
| Wisconsin            | 2.7    |
| Hawaii               | 2.7    |
| West Virginia        | 2.7    |
| South Dakota         | 2.7    |
| Michigan             | 2.7    |
| Minnesota            | 2.7    |
| South Carolina       | 2.6    |
| Arizona              | 2.6    |
| Ohio                 | 2.5    |
| Oregon               | 2.4    |
| Maine                | 2.3    |
| Connecticut          | 2.2    |
| Washington           | 2.1    |
| Colorado             | 2.0    |
| Nevada               | 2.0    |
| California           | 2.0    |
| Massachusetts        | 2.0    |
| New York             | 1.9    |
| Illinois             | 1.8    |
| Utah                 | 1.7    |
| New Jersey           | 1.7    |
| New Hampshire        | 1.6    |
| Rhode Island         | 1.5    |
| North Dakota         | 1.3    |

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; USA TODAY analysis by Anthony DeBarros

and she hauls her siblings to practices and other places. "I was a soccer mom at age 16," she says.

And the box has spotted a teen driving trend much the same way it identified stressed-out ambu-

lance drivers. The device has shown that Mallory and almost every other teen who has tested the box drive worse when they're racing to get home before curfew.

That finding in particular rattles the nerves of parents who still ache for the local families who lost their two teens in a late-night crash just before Christmas.

The tragic deaths were not unlike other teen driving fatalities that occur, on average, three times a day across the USA. Feeling good after his high school team won its basketball game, the teenage driver was tearing through town in a luxury SUV. He hit a wall at 107 mph. He was 16. The driver and one passenger died. Two other passengers survived.

"They were just trying to have fun," says Ryan Evans, 17, who knew them and now has the black box in his car. Does he think the box would have saved them? "It might have," he says.

## Inexperience kills

Charles Butler, director of safety services at AAA, says the Road Safety black box is a potentially useful, one-of-a-kind device. But he says parents would be mistaken to believe they could install the box in a car and automatically make their teenager a safer driver.

The biggest threat to young drivers, Butler says, is something the box can't fix — inexperience. Teen crashes, he says, are most often caused by three factors: not looking in the right place at the right time; being distracted behind the wheel by conversations, music, cellphones or even daydreams; and not being able to "manage the space around their car."

"It takes two to four years" of driving to become proficient, he says. Somewhere between 750 and 1,500 miles of driving in various conditions, he says, the "crash probability" begins to drop.

"Inexperienced 16-year-olds have three times as many crashes as 18-year-olds," Butler says. "If the box helps give parents peace of mind, maybe it's worth it. But if you really want peace of mind, don't let your kid drive alone. You can be the black box."

AAA offers tips for parents on how to teach driving. The video and a handbook, called *Teaching Your Teens to Drive: A partnership for survival*, cost \$21.95 (members get a discount) and are available to everyone through local AAA chapters or at [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com).

Bryce Riach, 17, says the black box in his 1998 Toyota Tacoma has

no impact on his driving. "I pretty much beep on every turn," he says, one week after the box was installed. "It's funny. . . . When it starts making noise, I just turn the (punk) music up," he says. "If my parents were looking at my results, it would be a bigger factor."

His parents know he has the box in his car as part of a study for Road Safety, but they have not yet seen any of his performance reports. Bryce says his parents don't know how he drives. "When I drive with them, I drive a lot safer, so they don't really know," he says.

Road Safety's Selditz agreed to display the previous five days of Bryce's driving on the company computer. The screen is full of red violations. There are 34 turns where at least half of the tires' traction was lost to high speed. There are more than 70 minutes of driving faster than 80 mph.

But one moment stands out. At 8:55 p.m. on the previous Thursday, he had lost nearly 70% of his traction while making a hard left turn. He had his headlights on, but he was not wearing his seat belt.

Bryce grins. "That is the island by my house," he explains. "It's an illegal turn, but if I don't make that turn I have to go up a mile and make a U-turn."

When a reporter tells his father, Ron Riach, a former firefighter, about the turn, the father of four young drivers is shocked: "That is a revelation. Especially about the seat belt. I have drilled that into their heads."

Bryce has heard the horror stories his dad has brought home from years on the street as a firefighter. But the boy says he doesn't worry about getting hurt.

"After I come close to getting into an accident, I think about what happened to those other people," he says. "But when I'm speeding, I don't really think about it."

Nearly two months have passed since Bryce got the black box. His parents still haven't looked at his black box reports, but constant reviews by Road Safety officials — who have threatened to remove the box and a \$50-a-week payment for his participation — have begun to tame his driving.

"My driving has changed a lot," he says. "I don't really like it, but it's good for me. It was hard to get used to, but now that I am used to it, I can still get around quickly."

His dad says Bryce has learned to drive within the box's parameters. "He's safer," Ron Riach says, "but to what extent, who knows."

Contributing: Anthony DeBarros

## 3-Tiered System for Driver Licensing under • HB 213

### ***Permit License***

Must be 14 yrs old  
Must pass written test

### ***Provisional License***

Minimum age: 16  
Must have had permit for 6 months  
Must pass road test

- Parent certification of 40 hrs driving offenses under progressively difficult circumstances
- Must have clean driving record (no convictions for traffic offenses in past 6 months)

#### ***While driving with a Provisional License:***

- No nite time driving between 1am and 5am
  - Exceptions: kids can get work permit to drive during restricted times, kids can drive with parent or legal guardian
- Generally no passengers
  - Exceptions: passengers who are siblings & adults over 21, passengers when accompanied by the driver's parent or legal guardian.

### ***Unrestricted***

- Must have had provisional license for 6 months
- Must have clean driving record (no convictions for traffic in past 6 months.)

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2004 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: 1  
 Bill Version: CSHB 213(TRA)  
 (H) Publish Date: 2/9/04

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Administration  
 Title Provisional Driver's License issuance RDU Division of Motor Vehicles  
 Component Motor Vehicles  
 Sponsor Rep. Weyhrauch  
 Requester House Transportation Component No. 2348

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

| OPERATING EXPENDITURES | FY 2005     | FY 2006     | FY 2007     | FY 2008     | FY 2009     | FY 2010     |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Personal Services      |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Travel                 |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Contractual            |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Supplies               | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        |
| Equipment              |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Land & Structures      |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Grants & Claims        |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Miscellaneous          |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| <b>TOTAL OPERATING</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> |

|                             |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

|                               |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b> | <b>102.3</b> | <b>102.3</b> | <b>102.3</b> | <b>102.3</b> | <b>102.3</b> | <b>102.3</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|

**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

|                                 |             |             |             |             |             |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1002 Federal Receipts           |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 1003 GF Match                   |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 1004 GF                         |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 1005 GF/Program Receipts        |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 1037 GF/Mental Health           |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| 1156 Receipt Supported Services | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        | 13.6        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> | <b>13.6</b> |

Estimate of any current year (FY2004) cost: 0.0  
 Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2005 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

|           |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Full-time |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Part-time |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Temporary |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

HB 213 will require the issuance of a Provisional Driver's License to 16 & 17 year old drivers. In 2003 there were 13644 DL's issued to this age group. We project 50% of those drivers will return to DMV to request new licenses without the Provisional restriction. Cost of of materials to produce these duplicates = \$2.00 x 6822. Revenue gained from issuing duplicate = \$15.00 x 6822.

Prepared by: Duane Bannock Phone 269 5008  
 Division Motor Vehicles Date/Time 1/20/04 9:19 AM  
 Approved by: Mike Miller, Commissioner Date 1/20/2004  
 Agency Department of Administration

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Representative Bruce Weyhrauch

HOUSE DISTRICT 4



ALASKA  
STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA  
99801-1182

(907) 465-3744  
FAX (907) 465-2273

## Sponsor Statement

### Graduated Driver's License for Teen Drivers

#### HB 213 (FIN)

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teenagers in Alaska. While there isn't a silver bullet cure to this utter tragedy, recent studies prove that the Graduated Driver's License system (GDL) is a giant step forward.

HB 213 implements GDL by creating a three-tiered system whereby young drivers pursue their full, unrestricted driver's license. Currently, Alaska only requires a driver under 18 to obtain and hold a learner's permit for 6-months before testing for a driver's license.\* Under HB 213, graduated licensing adds several important protections for the novice driver that relate to when they can drive, where they can drive, with whom and how.

- I. At age 16, a person may be eligible for a Provisional License when:
  - The youth has held a learner's permit for 6 months,
  - Their parent certifies that the youth of at least 40 hours of driving experience, including 10 of driving under progressively challenging conditions such as nighttime or inclement weather conditions, and
  - The youth has not been convicted for violating a traffic law for at least 6 months before applying.
- II. Once the youth holds a Provisional License, they are subject to several limitations for the first **6 months** of driving:
  - Driving between 1 am and 5 am is prohibited except:
  - Generally no passengers except for:
    - Passengers who are 21 yrs or older or siblings of the teen driver
    - Passengers when accompanied by the driver's parent or legal guardian.
- III. 6 months after the issuance of a Provisional License, the youth may apply to the department for an unrestricted license
  - *as long they have not been convicted of a traffic offence for at least six months preceding their application.*

~ More ~

Two important *exceptions* to the Provisional License law:

- A driver with a Provisional License may be eligible for a work permit so that they can drive to or from work or drive during the scope of their employment.
- Driver's issued permits or licenses under the DMV's hardship or off-systems licensing programs are in no way affected by the GDL licensing provisions.

**The Graduated Driver's License is a means for the young driver to gain experience on the road while minimizing risks.** As the driver gains experience, the provisions are gradually lifted and the youth is eligible for an unrestricted driver's license.

Since the National Transportation Safety Board adopted its graduated driver licensing recommendations in 1993, states have dramatically modified their driver licensing practices. Since 1993, the 38 states have adopted comprehensive GDL licensing system have reported significant reductions in fatality rates of teen drivers and passengers. In California, teen passenger deaths and injuries when 16-year olds are behind the wheel dropped 21 % statewide in 1998 and 1999. These results come two years after passage of California's GDL. Florida, which adopted GDL in 1997, saw a drop of 21 % in the rate teens are involved in accidents.

Research published in October 2001 from Michigan and North Carolina, two states with comprehensive laws that include both an extended learners' permit phase and a nighttime driving restriction reaffirms the effectiveness of graduated licensing. In Michigan, research shows that 16-year olds were 25% less likely to get into a crash; in North Carolina, the risk of a crash dropped by 23 %. Further, in North Carolina, nighttime crashes involving 16 year olds declined by 43% and fatal crashes dropped by 57 %.

~ Give them the time to learn to drive ~

The goal is to limit teen exposure to risky driving situations during their first few months of licensure, a time when their crash rates are extremely high. Parents indicate strong support for GDL and for the specific restrictions. Graduated licensing will save young lives in Alaska, guaranteed!

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\* In 1997, with passage of HB 11, Alaska adopted a mandatory 6-month learner's permit for drivers under 18 yrs old.

Contact: Linda Sylvester  
465-4963

Updated: February 26, 2004

## 3-Tiered System for Driver Licensing under • HB 213

### **Permit License**

Must be 14 yrs old  
Must pass written test

### **Provisional License**

Minimum age: 16  
Must have had permit for 6 months  
Must pass road test

- Parent certification of 40 hrs driving offenses under progressively difficult circumstances
- Must have clean driving record (no convictions for traffic offenses in past 6 months)

### **Unrestricted**

- Must have had provisional license for 6 months
- Must have clean driving record (no convictions for traffic in past 6 months.)

### **While driving with a Provisional License:**

- No nite time driving between 1am and 5am
  - Exceptions: kids can get work permit to drive during restricted times, kids can drive with parent or legal guardian
- Generally no passengers
  - Exceptions: passengers who are siblings & adults over 21, *passengers when accompanied by the driver's parent or legal guardian.*

# Instant Survey Results

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch



Thanks for taking my survey.

### Your answers have been tallied

Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire. Your responses will help my fellow legislators and I serve you better. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact me at the link here. [Send E-Mail.](#)

#### Residence?

|                     |    |       |
|---------------------|----|-------|
| in District 4       | 41 | 42.71 |
| outside District 4  | 15 | 15.62 |
| Outside Juneau area | 40 | 41.67 |

Total Answers = 96

#### Are you a licensed driver?

|     |    |       |
|-----|----|-------|
| Yes | 95 | 97.94 |
| No  | 2  | 2.06  |

Total Answers = 97

#### Gender?

|        |    |       |
|--------|----|-------|
| Male   | 30 | 31.25 |
| Female | 66 | 68.75 |

Total Answers = 96

#### Age?

|          |   |      |
|----------|---|------|
| under 18 | 5 | 5.21 |
| 19 - 25  | 1 | 1.04 |

26 - 30 8 8.33  
over 30 82 85.42  
Total Answers = 96

Do you believe new drivers get better with driving experience?

Yes 92 96.84  
No 2 2.11  
Not Sure 1 1.05  
Total Answers = 95

Do you believe teenage passengers are safer if their teenage driver has at least a minimum amount of driving experience?

Yes 89 92.71  
No 5 5.21  
Not Sure 2 2.08  
Total Answers = 96

Do you believe a teenager is safer driver if no other teenage passengers are in the vehicle?

Yes 85 87.63  
No 7 7.22  
Not Sure 5 5.15  
Total Answers = 97

Do you believe inexperienced teenage drivers should be restricted from driving between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.?

Yes 85 87.63  
No 7 7.22  
Not Sure 5 5.15  
Total Answers = 97

Would a provisional drivers license help parents reinforce safe driving habits and limitations on driving for teenage drivers?

Yes 83 86.46  
No 4 4.17  
Not Sure 9 9.38  
Total Answers = 96

If a provisional license law was written to allow exceptions to work related driving between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. and allowed carrying minor passengers who were siblings, would you support the general restrictions on newly licensed teen drivers while they gain driving experience?

|                    |    |       |
|--------------------|----|-------|
| Yes                | 84 | 86.60 |
| No                 | 7  | 7.22  |
| Not Sure           | 6  | 6.19  |
| Total Answers = 97 |    |       |

Even though it might place additional training responsibility on parents, would you support the provisional drivers license concept if it would substantially reduce the number of teenage auto accidents, injuries, and deaths as it has done in other states?

|                    |    |       |
|--------------------|----|-------|
| Yes                | 91 | 93.81 |
| No                 | 2  | 2.06  |
| Not Sure           | 4  | 4.12  |
| Total Answers = 97 |    |       |

Free form text entries are recorded, but not displayed.



## Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

Note: References shown by number in parenthesis following statistic. Full references listed at end.

### Overall Effectiveness:

- With varying lengths of learner phases (LPs), studies have shown that GDLs are effective in reducing teen crash rates:
  - California: 5% reduction with 6 week LP (1)
  - San Diego, California: 20% reduction with 6 month LP (2)
  - Connecticut: 22% reduction with 3-6 month LP (3)
  - Kentucky: 32% reduction with 180 day LP (4)
  - Michigan: 25% reduction with 50 hour LP (5)
  - Ohio: 11% reduction with 6 month LP (6)
  - New Zealand: 7% reduction with 6 month LP (7)
  - North Carolina: 27% reduction with 12 month LP (8)
  - Nova Scotia: 24% reduction with 6 month LP (9)
- GDL has also been shown to be effective in reducing injury/fatality crash rates:
  - Michigan: 24% reduction (5)
  - Florida: 11% reduction (10)

### Passenger Restrictions (PRs):

- Compared to other age groups, fatal crashes are more likely to occur when 16- and 17-year-old drivers had male passengers, passengers aged 20 to 29, and teenaged passengers (11)
- For drivers aged 16 and 17, the risk of death per 10 million trips with 3 or more other passengers was more than 2 and ½ times greater when compared to without passengers (11)
- 16-year-old drivers with passengers, compared to drivers of aged 30-59 with passengers, were 4.72 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash (12)
- New Zealand: After PRs were implemented, a 9% reduction in proportion of crashes involving teens resulted (13)
- San Diego, California: Passenger injuries per licensed driver decreased by 23% after implementation of PRs (2)

### Night Restrictions (NRs):

- North Carolina: With NRs at 9 pm, total crashes for 16-year-old drivers decreased by 47% at night (8)
- Florida: With NRs at 11 pm, night crashes for 16-year-olds decreased 17% (10)
- Michigan: With NRs from midnight to 5 am, there was a 53% reduction in night crashes for 16-year-olds (5)
- New Zealand: After NRs were imposed at 10 pm, a 37% reduction in night crashes occurred for 16-year-olds (7)

## References

1. Hagge RA, Marsh WC. The traffic Safety impact of provisional licensing. Report no. 116. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles, 1988.
2. Smith AM, Pierce J, Upledger R, et al. Motor vehicle occupant crashes among teens: impact of the graduated licensing law in San Diego. 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Proceeding of the Association for Advancement of Automotive Medicine. Barrington, Illinois, 2001.
3. Ulmer RG, Ferguson SA, Williams AF, et al. Teenage crash reduction associated with delayed licensure in Connecticut. Trumbull, CT: Preusser Research Group, 2000.
4. Agent KR, Steenbergen L, Pigman J, et al. Impact of partial graduated license program on teen motor vehicle crashes in Kentucky. Transportation Research Record 1779: Traffic Safety 2001. Transportation Research Board, 2001.
5. Shope JT, Molnar LJ, Elliott MR, et al. Graduated licensing in Michigan; early impact on motor vehicle crashes among 16-year-olds. JAMA 2001;286:1593-632.
6. Kilgore E. An evaluation of Ohio's graduated driver license law. Columbus, OH: Office of the Governor's Highway Safety Representative, Ohio Department of Public Safety, 2001.
7. Langley JD, Wagenaar AC, Begg DJ. An evaluation of the New Zealand graduated driver licensing system. *Accid Anal Prev* 1996;28:139-46.
8. Foss RD, Feaganes JR, Rodgman EA. Initial effects of graduated driver licensing on 16-year-old driver crashes in North Carolina. *JAMA*. 2001; 286: 1588-1592.
9. Mayhew DR, Simpson HM, Des Groseillers, et al. Impact of the graduated licensing program in Nova Scotia. *Journal of Crash Prevention and Injury Control* 2001;2:179-92.
10. Ulmer RG, Preusser DF, Williams AF, et al. Effect of Florida's graduated licensing program on the crash rate of teenage drivers. *Accid Anal Prev* 2000;32:529-32.
11. Chen L, Baker S, Braver ER, Li G. Carrying Passengers as a risk factor for crashes fatal to 16- and 17-year-old drivers. *JAMA* 2000; 283: 1579-1582.
12. Preusser DF, Ferguson SA and Williams AF. The Effect of Teenage Passengers on the Fatal Crash Risk of Teenage Drivers. *Accid Anal Prev* 1989; 30:217-222.
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# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of the Chairman

JAN 27 2004

Honorable Bruce Weyhrauch  
Representative  
Alaska House of Representatives  
State Capitol, Room 102  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Weyhrauch:

I understand that you have introduced House Bill 213, legislation to implement a comprehensive graduated driver licensing system for young novice drivers in Alaska. This measure provides the opportunity for Alaska to prevent the needless loss of many of its young citizens.

Motor vehicle crashes, which account for 40 percent of all teenage deaths, are the leading cause of death for our teenagers. Novice teenage drivers have a very high crash risk. Young drivers, ages 15 to 20, constitute less than 7 percent of all drivers nationwide, yet they are involved in more than 22 percent of all highway fatalities. In Alaska, young drivers constitute a little more than 7 percent of Alaska's licensed drivers, but they are involved in more than 23 percent of the fatalities that occur on Alaska's roads.

There are several similarities in fatal crashes involving young novice drivers. The drivers and passengers frequently are not belted, the cars are loaded with the drivers' peers, and often there is a deadly combination of inexperience and immaturity. When night driving is added to the equation, crash risk increases dramatically.

Young drivers do only 20 percent of their driving at night, but over 50 percent of their crash fatalities occur during nighttime hours. Among young novice drivers, 41 percent of motor vehicle deaths occur between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Nighttime outings tend to be recreational, and even teens who usually follow all the rules can be easily distracted.

Research indicates that nighttime restrictions can reduce young novice driver crashes during restricted hours by up to 70 percent. New York achieved a 69 percent reduction in crashes involving teenage drivers during the hours that the nighttime driving restriction was in effect. Other States have also seen reductions in young novice driver crashes during restricted hours.

Young drivers also pose a greater risk when carrying passengers, especially teen passengers. A study of Kentucky drivers found that young drivers have an increased propensity for causing single-vehicle crashes when traveling with peers and that the propensity for single-vehicle crashes

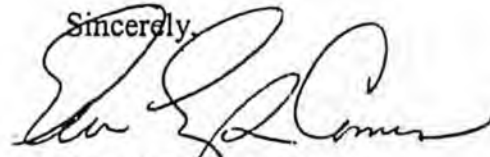
increases with the number of people in the vehicle. A separate study estimated that a nationwide adoption of passenger restrictions for all 16- and one-third of 17-year-old drivers would result in 60 to 350 fewer deaths per year.

These crashes are preventable, and legislative measures have been successful in other States to reduce both crashes and fatalities. The Safety Board recommended in 1993 that Alaska and other States implement a comprehensive graduated driver licensing system, including a nighttime driving restriction during the driver's first year. In 2002 the Board added a recommendation that young passengers be prohibited from carrying more than one passenger under age 20 unless accompanied by a supervising driver who is at least 21 years old. For additional information about the Board's position on graduated driver licensing and the evidence that supports our recommendations, please see the enclosed fact sheet.

The Safety Board believes an effective combination of tough, fair laws, vigorous enforcement, and intensive, targeted educational campaigns is needed. We are so convinced of the lifesaving benefit of these actions that we have included graduated licensing recommendations on our list of "Most Wanted" safety improvements. Graduated licensing, including a nighttime driving restriction, is one of the most effective actions that the Alaska Legislature can take to save both young lives and the lives of others involved in crashes with young drivers.

I hope that the Alaska legislature will act promptly on House Bill 213 to provide the best possible protection for people when they are riding in a motor vehicle. The Safety Board is available to support your efforts on this and other highway safety initiatives by testifying on legislation or meeting with legislators or advocacy groups. Please contact Mr. Kevin Quinlan, Safety Advocacy Division Chief, at (202) 314-6175, if we can be of assistance to you. For your information, Mr. Quinlan will be in Juneau on February 12, 2004, and would be available to meet with you about your legislation.

Sincerely,



Ellen Engleman Connors  
Chairman

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Cindy Cashen, Executive Director  
MADD Juneau Chapter



# National Transportation Safety Board

## Safety Information

Washington, D.C. 20594

### GRADUATED DRIVERS LICENSE *FACT SHEET*

#### **The Recommendation**

- The National Transportation Safety Board recommends enacting laws to provide for a three-stage graduated licensing system for young novice drivers, and restrict young novice drivers with provisional or intermediate licenses (second stage), unless accompanied by a supervising adult driver who is at least 21 years old, from carrying more than one passenger under the age of 20 until they receive an unrestricted license or for at least 6 months (whichever is longer).
- The National Transportation Safety Board recommends enacting laws that prohibit driving by young novice drivers between certain times, especially midnight to 5 a.m.
- The National Transportation Safety Board recommends enacting legislation to prohibit holders of learner's permits and intermediate licenses from using interactive wireless communication devices while driving.

#### **The Problem**

- Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among teenagers today.
- While teen drivers comprise about 6.6% of the driving population, they comprise more than 14% of the drivers involved in fatal crashes. And more than 22% of all highway fatalities occur in crashes involving teen drivers.
- In the past 5 years, more than 16,000 (16,656) people died in crashes involving 14-to -17-year-old drivers.
- 16-year-old drivers driving alone are more than twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash as older drivers.
- 16-year-old drivers are almost 5 times as likely to be in a crash when traveling with peer passengers.
- Passengers riding with young teen drivers are especially at risk; two-thirds of the fatally injured passengers in these teen driver crashes were teenagers themselves (between ages 15-19).
- The risk of a crash increases greatly with each additional teen passenger riding with a young teen driver.
- Studies from nearly a dozen States show that deaths and serious injuries from traffic crashes involving young drivers declined by as much as 58 percent following enactment of graduated licensing provisions (depending upon the provisions of the law).

**Effective Actions**

- **Learner's Permit**
  - 6 month minimum holding period (without an at-fault crash or traffic violation)
  - Supervised driving requirement with supervising driver age 21 or older
  - Require seat belt use by all passengers in all seating positions
  - Prohibit driving with any measurable blood alcohol level
  - Prohibit cell phone use by drivers with a learner's permit
  
- **Intermediate (provisional) Permit**
  - 6 month minimum holding period (without an at-fault crash or traffic violation)
  - Nighttime driving restriction (especially between midnight and 5 a.m.)
  - Teen Passenger restriction (none or 1)
  - Require seat belt use by all passengers in all seating positions
  - Prohibit driving with any measurable blood alcohol level
  - Prohibit cell phone use by drivers with a provisional permit
  
- **Full licensure**
  - Require seat belt use by all passengers in all seating positions
  - Prohibit driving with any measurable blood alcohol level by all drivers under age 21.



AAA Alaska  
(800) 391-4AAA

January 21, 2004

House Transportation Committee  
House of Representatives  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative:

Among the very important legislation under consideration this session is House Bill 213, an act to implement Graduated Drivers Licensing. AAA strongly supports this bill and we urge your support as well.

Driving is a skill that is learned by doing. Unfortunately it is also an inherently risky endeavor. The premise of Graduated Drivers Licensing is simple and it works -- extend the learning process and reduce exposure to risk and you'll reduce the number of teen crashes. House Bill 213 does this.

This bill has all the components of the most successful GDL systems. It provides for time to learn -- the six-month instruction permit. It provides for behind the wheel experience -- the 50 hours of certified driving experience. It provides for responsibility - six months of citation free driving. And finally -- it removes two major risk factors for novice drivers -- passengers and late night driving.

Please review the enclosed information regarding how injuries, accidents, and fatalities have been reduced with GDL. AAA estimates that through GDL, the state of Alaska over a decade could prevent some 970 injuries, over 3,000 crashes, and save over \$21 million dollars.

The time has come for us to change the way we teach our teens to drive, and people are ready. A recent AAA poll shows that 74 percent of Americans support laws limiting teenage passengers who may ride with inexperienced teen drivers, and that 73 percent of adults think that officials should do more to improve the safety of drivers between the ages of 15 to 19.

You have before you an excellent opportunity to protect teen drivers, their passengers, and all on the road. Please support House Bill 213.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Charity Watt Levis'.

Charity Watt Levis  
Manager, Public Relations

enclosures

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**ANCHORAGE SOUTH**

9191 Old Seward Hwy. #20, 99515  
TEL (907) 344-4310  
FAX (907) 344-4319

**FAIRBANKS**

3409 Airport Way, 99709  
TEL (907) 479-4442  
FAX (907) 479-4899



**AAA Projects Prevention of 1.5 Million Crashes  
and Savings of Over \$9 Billion  
over next decade through  
National Adoption of GDL Laws**

|               | TEN YEAR<br>INJURIES<br>PREVENTED | TEN YEAR<br>CRASHES<br>PREVENTED | TEN YEAR TOTAL COST SAVINGS |  | TEN YEAR<br>INJURIES<br>PREVENTED | TEN YEAR<br>CRASHES<br>PREVENTED | TEN YEAR TOTAL COST<br>SAVINGS |               |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Alabama       | 10,260                            | 32,020                           | \$223,062,990               |  | Missouri                          | 10,390                           | 32,280                         | \$225,469,800 |
| <b>Alaska</b> | <b>970</b>                        | <b>3,020</b>                     | <b>\$21,077,810</b>         |  | Montana                           | 2,240                            | 6,990                          | \$48,691,910  |
| Arizona       | 6,030                             | 18,690                           | \$130,689,070               |  | Nebraska                          | 4,360                            | 13,580                         | \$94,702,930  |
| Arkansas      | 4,710                             | 14,670                           | \$102,340,600               |  | Nevada                            | 2,790                            | 8,710                          | \$60,683,380  |
| California*   | 30,210                            | 93,650                           | \$654,987,830               |  | New Hampshire                     | 2,350                            | 7,290                          | \$50,920,750  |
| Colorado      | 7,480                             | 23,280                           | \$162,449,270               |  | New Jersey                        | 5,440                            | 16,320                         | \$116,454,450 |
| Connecticut   | 3,180                             | 9,780                            | \$68,732,690                |  | New Mexico                        | 3,480                            | 10,890                         | \$75,739,690  |
| Delaware      | 1,120                             | 3,450                            | \$24,172,500                |  | New York                          | 15,080                           | 46,550                         | \$326,483,330 |
| D.C.          | 230                               | 700                              | \$4,915,760                 |  | North Carolina                    | 15,560                           | 48,580                         | \$338,193,690 |
| Florida       | 26,690                            | 83,220                           | \$579,998,340               |  | North Dakota                      | 1,710                            | 5,330                          | \$37,127,450  |
| Georgia       | 11,670                            | 36,310                           | \$253,399,620               |  | Ohio                              | 17,870                           | 55,450                         | \$387,561,370 |
| Hawaii        | 1,430                             | 4,420                            | \$30,911,100                |  | Oklahoma                          | 7,430                            | 23,140                         | \$101,368,770 |
| Idaho         | 3,460                             | 10,810                           | \$75,273,690                |  | Oregon                            | 4,900                            | 15,200                         | \$106,281,310 |

|                            |                |                  |                        |  |                |        |         |               |  |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------------|--|----------------|--------|---------|---------------|--|
| Illinois                   | 20,120         | 62,490           | \$436,497,860          |  | Pennsylvania   | 13,330 | 41,270  | \$288,869,510 |  |
| Indiana                    | 10,680         | 33,160           | \$231,665,410          |  | Rhode Island   | 800    | 2,420   | \$17,161,200  |  |
| Iowa                       | 6,950          | 21,710           | \$151,136,000          |  | South Carolina | 6,470  | 20,130  | \$140,455,970 |  |
| Kansas                     | 7,200          | 22,470           | \$156,493,400          |  | South Dakota   | 2,140  | 6,670   | \$46,451,940  |  |
| Kentucky                   | 6,300          | 19,540           | \$136,583,620          |  | Tennessee      | 10,530 | 32,850  | \$228,819,010 |  |
| Louisiana                  | 6,760          | 20,980           | \$146,683,870          |  | Texas          | 40,110 | 125,000 | \$871,322,210 |  |
| Maine                      | 1,800          | 5,570            | \$38,996,100           |  | Utah           | 6,590  | 20,540  | \$143,195,450 |  |
| Maryland                   | 6,210          | 19,250           | \$134,566,700          |  | Vermont        | 1,000  | 3,100   | \$21,705,250  |  |
| Massachusetts              | 5,460          | 16,680           | \$117,783,060          |  | Virginia       | 12,120 | 38,590  | \$265,531,830 |  |
| Michigan                   | 14,260         | 44,150           | \$309,076,220          |  | Washington     | 9,000  | 27,960  | \$195,339,760 |  |
| Minnesota                  | 7,830          | 24,260           | \$169,654,660          |  | West Virginia  | 2,880  | 8,960   | \$62,581,740  |  |
| Mississippi                | 5,140          | 15,990           | \$111,560,420          |  | Wisconsin      | 10,770 | 33,490  | \$233,729,770 |  |
|                            |                |                  |                        |  | Wyoming        | 570    | 1,710   | \$12,173,900  |  |
| <b>TEN YEAR<br/>TOTALS</b> | <b>416,060</b> | <b>1,293,270</b> | <b>\$9,029,725,750</b> |  |                |        |         |               |  |

COMPARISON OF YOUNG AND ADULT DRIVER  
CRASHES IN ALASKA USING LINKED TRAFFIC CRASH  
AND HOSPITAL DATA

**Martha Moore**

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services  
Community Health and Emergency Medical Services  
P.O. Box 110616  
Juneau AK 99801

# COMPARISON OF YOUNG AND ADULT DRIVER CRASHES IN ALASKA USING LINKED TRAFFIC CRASH AND HOSPITAL DATA

## ABSTRACT

This report describes the most serious young driver crashes in Alaska for the period 1991 through 1995. Rates, characteristics, and medical and financial out-comes of young driver crashes are compared with that of adult driver crashes. This research project demonstrates the usefulness of data linkage in crash research. Using the Mini Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (MINICODES), trauma registry hospital discharge data were linked with traffic crash records. The data were analyzed to compare drivers aged 16-20 with drivers aged 21-50 who were involved in a crash resulting in the hospitalization or death of a crash victim. The CrashCost Program was used to estimate costs associated with young driver crashes for the five years.

Young drivers were 2.9 times more likely than adult drivers to be involved in crashes that resulted in the hospitalization of a crash victim, and 2.6 times more likely to be involved in a crash involving a fatality. Human factors were recorded as contributing factors for 68.2% of the young drivers, compared with 55.5% of the adult drivers ( $P < .0001$ ). The highest hospital charge averages were those incurred by the victims of motor-cycle crashes. Total costs associated with the young driver crashes were estimated to be over \$300 million, which resulted in a cost per young licensed driver that was 3.4 times the cost per adult licensed driver.

## INTRODUCTION

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young people in the United States aged 15 to 20 years. National statistics reveal that teen drivers are disproportionately involved in crashes. In 1995, young drivers aged 15 to 20 years comprised only 6.7% of the driving population, yet they accounted for 14% of the drivers involved in fatal crashes and 17% of the drivers in police-reported crashes. The losses these crashes represent in terms of human suffering are vast and difficult to quantify. The financial toll has been estimated at \$31 billion annually (1).

There are a number of factors that impact the driving performances of teens including age, inexperience, supervised driving, and night driving. An examination of the

effects of the different state laws on 15-17 year old driver fatality rates found that the minimum legal driving age and curfew laws had the greatest impact on driver fatality rates (2). Delayed full licensure age, night driving curfews, and supervised driving have all been shown to be effective in mitigating the high crash rate among 16 year olds. In upstate New York, however, where a combination of these strategies are employed, crash involvement rates remained low through age 24, compared with the other northeastern states studied (3).

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) recommends that states adopt a graduated licensing system that combines delayed full-privilege licensure, supervised driving, and night driving curfews. An evaluation of the effectiveness of New Zealand's graduated licensing system, in place since 1987, reveals a 23% reduction in crash injuries for the 15 to 19 year old population (4). Eleven states now have some form of graduated licensing. Evaluations of graduated licensing in California, Maryland, and Oregon demonstrated a 5-16% reduction in young driver crashes (5).

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Alaskans aged 16 through 20 and cause almost 50% of the unintentional injury deaths for this age group. Drivers in this age range were involved in 13.1% of police-reported crashes in Alaska during the period 1991 through 1995 while they accounted for only 6.3% of licensed drivers in the state. The crash rate of drivers aged 16 through 20 from 1991 through 1995 was 135.9 crashes per 1,000 drivers, which was 2.4 times the crash rate of drivers aged 21 through 50 (56.9 per 1,000 drivers).

Among 16 through 20 year old drivers, the crash rate in Alaska decreased each year to age 20. The crash rate of 17 year old drivers was 24% lower than that of 16 year old drivers; the 18 year old driver crash rate was 22% lower than that of 17 year old drivers; the 19 year old driver crash rate was 21% lower than that of 18 year old drivers, and, the 20 year old driver crash rate was 12% lower than that of 19 year old drivers.

The purpose of this study is to describe the most severe young driver crashes in Alaska, between 1991 and 1995, in terms of rates, characteristics, and medical and financial outcomes; to make comparisons between youth driver crashes and adult driver crashes; and, to demonstrate the usefulness of data linkage in crash research.

## METHODS

Computerized crash records from the Highway Analysis System (HAS) for 1991 through 1995 were obtained from Alaska's Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. This system contains information on motor vehicle crashes on a trafficway, either recorded by police or self-reported. Alaska law requires that any motor vehicle crash which results in death, injury, or property damage of \$500 or more must be reported to the Alaska Department of Public Safety. Data include passenger demographics, type of vehicle, type of crash, contributing factors, type of injury, and body region injured. There are up to two contributing factors listed per driver involved in a crash, recorded by the enforcement officer. They fall into four main categories: human error, roadway conditions, environmental elements, and vehicle defects.

Hospital discharge data were extracted from the Alaska Trauma Registry, also for 1991 through 1995. The trauma registry is a statewide information system housed in the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, which includes detailed data on all injury hospitalizations in the state. Alaska's trauma registry is somewhat unique in that trauma data are collected from all Alaskan acute care hospitals, of which there are 24, and are collected on all patients admitted for 24 hours or more. Data include patient demographics, ambulance service transport and treatment, hospital treatment and length of stay, diagnosis, injury severity, discharge status, charges, and payer billed.

In order to associate circumstances of crashes with corresponding injury outcomes, crash records and trauma registry records were linked using the Mini Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (MINICODES), developed by the National Association of Governor's Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR) with the support of NHTSA. This software relies on a probabilistic linkage methodology which is particularly useful with data that lack identifiers or may contain incomplete or erroneous information. The methodology has been extensively tested and has demonstrated high precision matching (6).

Trauma registry records were considered for linkage by virtue of an external cause of injury code (E Code) in the range 810.0-816.9 and 819.0-819.9, motor vehicle traffic collision injury. E Codes are a coding system within the International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM), which are routinely entered into the Trauma Registry for each trauma patient. The identifiers used for linkage of the two databases were sex, age, birthdate, geographic region, and probable hospital admission date and time. Additional variables were used to review questionable matches. They consisted of vehicle type, crash type, residence city, crash city, position of injured person in vehicle, anatomical location of injury, and the injury description.

Only the most serious crashes were considered for study, i.e. those involving the hospitalization or death of a crash participant. A hospital crash refers to any motor vehicle traffic crash resulting in at least one victim of the crash admitted to a hospital for 24 hours or more. A fatal crash refers to any motor vehicle traffic crash resulting in at least one fatality. A fatality is defined as a death that occurs as a direct result of a motor vehicle crash within 30 days of the injury or during an acute care hospital stay if the patient was originally hospitalized within 30 days of the injury.

Through linkage of traffic crash data with trauma registry data, two populations were identified for study: drivers in crashes and victims of crashes. Drivers were divided into two groups, those aged 16 through 20 who are referred to as young drivers, and those aged 21 through 50, referred to as adult drivers. These two age groups were used for comparison to avoid the introduction of older drivers who are involved in crash patterns unique to their group. The victims of the crashes were described in terms of outcome, hospital charge payment source, and costs. The victims were also divided into two groups, those who were victims of young driver crashes and those who were victims of adult driver crashes.

Safety equipment consists of safety belts, safety belts with harnesses, child safety seats, and helmets. Alcohol involvement is recorded as a contributing factor on the police record if alcohol use is confirmed by a test or suspected. Disability is defined as the expectation that the patient will never be able to return to his or her pre-injury level of function in the judgement of the trauma registrar collecting the information from the medical record file.

Average hospital charges per crash victim were calculated using available trauma registry data. Because not all of the hospitals release this information, hospital charges are missing on about 50% of the trauma registry patients. More inclusive cost estimates were derived using the CrashCost Program obtained from NHTSA. This software program estimates the economic costs of motor vehicle crashes, including direct medical expenses, direct "other" expenses and indirect costs. The CrashCost program also accounts for unreported crashes and adjusts for locality and current economics (7).

The CrashCost estimates were based on Alaska specific data on the number of crash fatalities and the number of patients identified with an Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS) score of four (severe injury) or five (critical injury). Injuries of an AIS of three or less are not adequately tracked by the trauma registry since only patients admitted to the hospital for one or more days are entered into the database. Therefore, the national ratio based estimates from the CrashCost Program were used to estimate the number of these less severe injuries.

## RESULTS

A total of 3,158 trauma registry records were considered for linkage with traffic records, resulting in 2,183 matches, or a 69.1% matching success rate. The linked trauma registry records were compared with the unlinked records to see if the linked records were representative of the unlinked records. There were no significant differences between the groups in sex and age, however, there were significant differences relating to geographic location of crash and type of crash. The crashes among the linked trauma registry records occurred more often in the urban areas (Anchorage, Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and Juneau) ( $p < .0001$ ). There was a significantly smaller percentage of Alaska Natives in this group than in the unlinked data group ( $p < .0001$ ). The mean injury severity was greater among the linked records than among the unlinked records ( $p < .05$ ). The linked data also included less pedestrian injuries ( $p < .0001$ ) and more driver injuries ( $p < .0001$ ) than the unlinked data.

### Drivers

Linkage of traffic crash data with trauma registry data resulted in 2,508 drivers identified for their involvement in hospital and fatal crashes: 488 young drivers and 2,020 adult drivers. A comparison of crash involvement rates of young and adult drivers, annualized over the five-year period, is shown in Table 1. Young drivers were 2.9 times more likely to be involved in crashes that resulted in the hospitalization of a crash victim, and 2.6 times more likely to be involved in a crash involving a fatality.

**Table 1.**  
Annualized Young and Adult Driver Involvement Rates in Hospital and Fatal Crashes, Alaska, 1991-1995

|                            | Young Drivers<br>(Age 16-20)<br>N=488 |       | Adult Drivers<br>(Age 21-50)<br>N=2,020 |       | Rate<br>Ratio |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|---|-------|---------------|
|                            | N                                     | Rate* | N                                       | Rate* |               |
| Hospital Crash Involvement | 408                                   | 3.15  | 1,659                                   | 1.10  | 2.86          |
| Fatal Crash Involvement    | 80                                    | 0.617 | 361                                     | 0.240 | 2.57          |

The young and adult drivers in hospital and fatal crashes are compared in Table 2. The two groups of drivers were similarly distributed by sex and use of safety equipment. Hospital and fatal crashes occurred most often during the summer months (July and August) among both groups of drivers. The time of day of the crash was also similar between the two groups. Adult driver crashes that

resulted in serious injury peaked in late afternoon and early evening (25.6%) and young drivers were most at risk between noon and 4 PM (23.4%).

**Table 2.**  
Comparison of Young and Adult Drivers in Hospital and Fatal Crashes by Driver Sex, Safety Equipment Use, and Crash Time, Alaska, 1991-1995

|                             | Young Drivers<br>(Age 16-20)<br>N=488 |         | Adult Drivers<br>(Age 21-50)<br>N=2,020 |         |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|---|---------|
|                             | N                                     | Percent | N                                       | Percent |
| <b>Sex</b>                  |                                       |         |   |         |
| Male                        | 324                                   | 66.4%   | 1,441                                   | 71.3%   |
| Female                      | 164                                   | 33.6%   | 579                                     | 28.7%   |
| <b>Safety Equipment Use</b> |                                       |         |   |         |
| Recorded                    | 462                                   |         | 1,871                                   |         |
| Used                        | 252                                   | 54.5%   | 1,053                                   | 55.9%   |
| Not Used                    | 210                                   | 45.5%   | 818                                     | 44.1%   |
| Unrecorded                  | 26                                    |         | 149                                     |         |
| <b>Crash time</b>           |                                       |         |   |         |
| Midnight-4am                | 90                                    | 18.4%   | 304                                     | 15.0%   |
| 4am-8am                     | 36                                    | 7.4%    | 187                                     | 9.3%    |
| 8am-noon                    | 48                                    | 9.8%    | 232                                     | 11.5%   |
| noon-4pm                    | 114                                   | 23.4%   | 403                                     | 20.0%   |
| 4pm-8pm                     | 111                                   | 22.7%   | 517                                     | 25.6%   |
| 8pm-midnight                | 89                                    | 18.2%   | 377                                     | 18.7%   |

\* Rate per 1,000 licensed drivers

There are up to two contributing factors recorded in the traffic crash database for each driver in a crash. As indicated in Table 3, the percentage of young drivers with a contributing factor due to human error, as recorded by the investigating officer, was significantly higher than that of the adult drivers ( $p < .0001$ ). Conversely, there was a greater percentage of adult drivers with "no contributing factor" recorded to describe their involvement in the crash ( $p = .01$ ).

**Table 3.**  
Comparison of Young and Adult Drivers in Hospital and Fatal Crashes by Contributing Factor, Alaska, 1991-1995

|               | Percent of Young Drivers with the Contributing Factor<br>N=488 |           | Percent of Adult Drivers with the Contributing Factor<br>N=2,020 |           |
|---------------|--|-----------|--|-----------|
|               | N  | Percent * | N  | Percent * |
| Human         | 333  | 68.2%     | 1,122  | 55.5% **  |
| Vehicle       | 22   | 4.5%      | 49   | 2.4%      |
| Environmental | 23   | 4.7%      | 75   | 3.7%      |
| Roadway       | 41   | 8.4%      | 122  | 6.0%      |
| None          | 78   | 16.0%     | 551  | 27.3%***  |
| Unknown       | 7  | 1.4%      | 21   | 1.0%      |

\* Up to two contributing factors per driver so that column does not equal 100%

\*\*  $p < .0001$

\*\*\*  $p = .01$

The contributing factors attributed to the young and adult drivers are detailed in Table 4. "Unsafe speed," i.e. speed too fast for conditions, was recorded as a contributing factor of the crash for 29.1% of the young drivers. "Alcohol" was believed to be a factor in the crashes of almost 16%. Conversely, alcohol was recorded factor for 24.9% of the adult drivers, with unsafe speed ranking second at 19.9%.

**Table 4.**  
Comparison of Young and Adult Drivers in Hospital or Fatal Crashes by Contributing Factor, Alaska, 1991-1995

|                                  | Percent of Young Drivers with the Contributing Factor<br>N=488 |          | Percent of Adult Drivers with the Contributing Factor<br>N=2,020 |          |
|----------------------------------|--|----------|--|----------|
|                                  | N  | Percent* | N  | Percent* |
| Unsafe Speed                     | 142  | 29.1%    | 401  | 19.9%**  |
| Alcohol                          | 76   | 15.6%    | 502  | 24.9%*** |
| Driver Inattention               | 59   | 12.1%    | 142  | 7.0%     |
| Failure to Yield                 | 45   | 9.2%     | 144  | 7.1%     |
| Driver Inexperience              | 36   | 7.4%     | 28   | 1.4%     |
| Pavement Slippery                | 32   | 6.6%     | 107  | 5.3%     |
| Improper Lane Usage/Passing      | 27   | 5.5%     | 76   | 3.8%     |
| Traffic Control Devise Disregard | 24   | 4.9%     | 79   | 3.9%     |
| Other Human Factor               | 19   | 3.9%     | 81   | 4.0%     |
| Turning Improperly               | 10   | 2.0%     | 35   | 1.7%     |
| Fell Asleep                      | 9  | 1.8%     | 42   | 2.1%     |
| View Obstructed                  | 8  | 1.6%     | 36   | 1.8%     |

\* Up to two contributing factors per driver so that column does not equal 100%

\*\*  $p = .04$

\*\*\*  $p = .04$

## Victims

Table 5 describes the outcomes of the two crash victim groups. There was no significant difference between the victims of the young driver crashes and those of the adult driver crashes in injury severity or length of hospital stay.

**Table 5.**  
Outcomes of Young and Adult Driver Crashes, Alaska, 1991-1995

|                                | Young Driver Crash Victims<br>N=584 |         | Adult Driver Crash Victims<br>N=1,894 |         |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|---------|
|                                | N                                   | Percent | N                                     | Percent |
| Total Deaths                   | 99                                  |         | 344                                   |         |
| Scene Deaths                   | 67                                  |         | 228                                   |         |
| Hospital Deaths                | 32                                  |         | 116                                   |         |
| Hospitalizations               | 517                                 |         | 1,666                                 |         |
|                                | Mean                                |         | Mean                                  |         |
| Injury Severity Score *        | 10.8                                |         | 11                                    |         |
| Length of Hospital Stay (days) | 6.7                                 |         | 7.6                                   |         |
|                                | N                                   | Percent | N                                     | Percent |
| Head Injury                    | 208                                 | 40.2%   | 628                                   | 37.7%   |
| Chest Injury                   | 116                                 | 22.4%   | 402                                   | 24.1%   |
| Spinal Cord Injury             | 14                                  | 2.7%    | 43                                    | 2.6%    |
| Discharged with Disability     | 70                                  | 13.5%   | 186                                   | 11.2%   |

\* Injury Severity Score is on a scale from 1 to 75, with 75 the most severe. An ISS of 16 or greater defines major trauma.

Average hospital charges for both groups of victims are listed in Table 6. These figures are based on available cost data from the trauma registry. Included are charges by type of vehicle, contributing factor, and use of helmets and safety belts. There were no significant differences between the two groups at the 95% confidence level in any of the categories compared. The highest average charges were those associated with motorcycle crash patients. The average charge for hospitalization for non-helmeted victims of young driver crashes was twice that of the helmeted victims.

**Table 6.**

## Hospital Charges of Young and Adult Driver Crashes by Vehicle Type, Contributing Factor and Safety Equipment Use, Alaska, 1991-1995

|                             | Young Driver Crash Victims, N=517 |                | Adult Driver Crash Victims, N=1,666 |                |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
|                             | Mean                              | Standard Error | Mean                                | Standard Error |
| All                         | \$16,269                          | \$ 1,640       | \$18,174                            | \$ 1,146       |
| <b>Vehicle Type</b>         |                                   |                |                                     |                |
| Passenger Car               | \$15,250                          | \$ 1,889       | \$17,397                            | \$ 1,450       |
| Motorcycle                  | \$27,354                          | \$ 8,344       | \$30,148                            | \$ 6,279       |
| Pick-Up Truck               | \$18,482                          | \$ 5,653       | \$15,599                            | \$ 1,748       |
| <b>Contributing Factor</b>  |                                   |                |                                     |                |
| Unsafe Speed                | \$14,344                          | \$ 2,575       | \$22,778                            | \$ 2,511       |
| Alcohol Use                 | \$19,426                          | \$ 5,614       | \$18,911                            | \$ 2,184       |
| Driver Inattention          | \$17,129                          | \$ 4,452       | \$15,504                            | \$ 2,848       |
| Failure to Yield            | \$10,201                          | \$ 2,294       | \$19,062                            | \$ 2,797       |
| <b>Safety Equipment Use</b> |                                   |                |                                     |                |
| Safety Equipment Used       | \$15,543                          | \$ 2,223       | \$15,943                            | \$ 1,514       |
| Safety Belt                 | \$15,220                          | \$ 2,547       | \$14,355                            | \$ 1,176       |
| Motorcycle Helmet           | \$17,309                          | \$ 3,699       | \$28,323                            | \$ 9,519       |
| No Safety Equipment Used    | \$17,087                          | \$ 2,512       | \$19,599                            | \$ 1,774       |
| No Safety Belt              | \$14,259                          | \$ 2,420       | \$19,518                            | \$ 2,505       |
| No Helmet                   | \$34,640                          | \$19,672       | \$28,407                            | \$ 7,029       |

The distribution of payers billed for hospital expenses associated with the 2,183 hospitalized victims are presented in Table 7. Of the patients involved in the young driver crashes, the largest percentage billed their hospital expenses to private health insurance (33.1%), followed by those who were uninsured (19.3%), and those covered by automotive insurance (14.7%).

**Table 7.**

**Payers Billed for Hospitalization of Victims of Young Driver and Adult Driver Crashes, Alaska, 1991-1995**

|                          | Young Driver<br>Crash Victims<br>N=517 |         | Adult Driver<br>Crash Victims<br>N=1,666 |         |
|--------------------------|--|---------|--|---------|
|                          | N                                      | Percent | N  | Percent |
| Private                  | 171                                    | 33.1%   | 472                                      | 28.3%   |
| Uninsured                | 100                                    | 19.3%   | 368                                      | 22.1%   |
| Automotive               | 76                                     | 14.7%   | 225                                      | 13.5%   |
| Indian Health<br>Service | 50                                     | 9.7%    | 174                                      | 10.4%   |
| Medicaid                 | 40                                     | 7.7%    | 110                                      | 6.6%    |
| Military                 | 24                                     | 4.6%    | 118                                      | 7.1%    |
| Champus                  | 12                                     | 2.3%    | 42                                       | 2.5%    |
| Medicare                 | 10                                     | 1.9%    | 48                                       | 2.9%    |
| Other/Unknown            | 34                                     | 6.6%    | 109                                      | 6.6%    |

Table 8 gives estimates of the total costs associated with young and adult driver crashes in Alaska for the five years using the CrashCost Program. Cost per young licensed driver was 3.4 times the cost per adult licensed driver.

**Table 8.**  
**Cost Estimates for Young and Adult Driver Crashes, Alaska, 1991-1995 \***

|                                | Young Driver<br>Crashes | Adult Driver<br>Crashes |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|                                | N                       | N                       |
| Fatalities                     | 99                      | 344                     |
| Injuries **                    | 7,648                   | 26,569                  |
| Property<br>Damage Only        | 34,333                  | 119,248                 |
|                                | Cost                    | Cost                    |
| Direct Medical<br>Costs        | \$ 36,750,837           | \$126,786,020           |
| Direct Other<br>Costs          | \$134,898,306           | \$468,099,927           |
| Indirect Costs                 | \$131,086,293           | \$454,729,271           |
| Total                          | \$302,735,436           | \$1,049,615,218         |
| Cost per<br>Licensed<br>Driver | \$2,336                 | \$697                   |

\* Cost estimates based on NHTSA CrashCost Program

\*\* Injuries include hospitalized and non-hospitalized

**DISCUSSION**

Alaska is similar to the rest of the nation in that young people are disproportionately involved in motor vehicle crashes, and crash injuries constitute a major health problem among this group. Alaska is, however, distinctive by having the lowest population density of any state, about one person per square mile. There are 13,485 miles of roads but only five of Alaska's urban centers are connected by road. The formidable terrain, isolation, and extreme weather conditions make access to medical care a challenge for residents and visitors alike who are involved in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Teen drivers demonstrated a greater propensity for involvement in the most severe crashes compared with adults, but the involvement rate did not increase significantly with injury severity.

The serious and fatal crashes involving young drivers were more likely attributed to human factors compared with crashes involving adult drivers. These data suggest that immaturity, inexperience and risk-taking behaviors contribute to young driver crashes.

The high percentage of safety belt and helmet nonuse among both of the study populations (44%-46%) is partially explained by the fact that these were the drivers in crashes resulting in the most serious injuries, including injuries to themselves. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey of 1995 reported that about 20% of Alaska high school students surveyed responded that they rarely or never use safety belts. Among those who ride motorcycles, about 40% rarely or never wear helmets (8). In response to the 1995 Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, 33.1% of adults reported that they did not always use safety belts (9). These percentages are all higher than comparable national percentages. Lap and shoulder belts are 40-50% effective in reducing deaths and 45-55% effective in preventing moderate-to-critical injuries to passenger vehicle occupants (10). NHTSA estimates that helmets are 29% effective in preventing fatal injuries to motorcyclists and in a recent study showed that motorcycle helmets are 67% effective in preventing brain injuries (11).

Alcohol was not the leading contributing factor in young driver crashes as it was for adult driver crashes. This has been reported by other researchers and can be attributed largely to an alcohol purchase age of 21 in all states and a zero tolerance law for drivers under the age of 21 in 30 states, including Alaska. Zero tolerance means that anyone with a BAC level above 0.02 g/dl is considered legally intoxicated (1, 12, 13).

Almost 50% of hospitalized victims of teen driver crashes relied on private or automotive insurance to pay their hospital expenses. One hundred victims, or 19.3%, were uninsured. The hospital charges of an additional 26.3% of the patients were billed to a government program. NHTSA estimates that nationally private insurance

companies pay 55% of medical costs for hospitalized patients of motor vehicle crashes and the government pays only 23% (14). Alaska has a large Native American population and several military bases, which contribute to a significant role of the federal government in covering the cost of medical care in the state.

The highest average costs of hospitalization were incurred by motorcycle crash victims. Unhelmeted crash patients topped the list with an average cost of over \$34,000, double that of the helmeted victims in the same group.

Using the CrashCost Program, the estimated costs for teen driver crashes in Alaska for five years was over \$300 million. The financial burden quickly becomes an issue of public policy when such a large percentage of the cost is reimbursed with public funds.

There were several limitations to this study. Every driver in a crash was included in the crash involvement rates. Multiple car crashes involving more than one driver added multiple drivers to the statistics, often into both age groups simultaneously. In reality, driver responsibility for crashes is more complex than that, with participants assuming varying degrees of fault. For the purpose of this study, however, driver responsibility was given equal weight and was based on involvement.

Missing and incorrect data is undoubtedly partly responsible for the inability to link all trauma registry records with traffic crash records. The error rate in data linkage due to the linkage process itself has not been quantified. It is believed, however, that the 31% in non-linked data was largely due to unreported traffic crashes. A comparison of hospital discharge files and police road injury data in Australia resulted in a linkage rate of 64%. The researchers found increased linkage with injury severity and varying linkage rates with different types of crashes (29% for motorcyclists vs. 79% for motor vehicle drivers.) They also noted that the casualties outside the urban area linked less often to a police report than the urban casualties. Their conclusion was that the low linkage rate was largely due to the underreporting of crashes by police (15).

An under reporting of pedestrian injuries was reported by Agran, Castillo and Winn in 1987, in a comparison of police report information with hospital monitoring system information in Orange County, California. It was estimated that police underreported pedestrian injuries by 20%. The researchers also noted that nontraffic incidents were especially underreported, mainly because the police database criteria excludes cases occurring on private property (driveways, sidewalks and parking lots) where a large percentage of pedestrian injuries occur (16). Similarly, Alaska's traffic crash data reporting system excludes incidents on private property, as well as those involving vehicles not customarily used for transport on roads.

Other possible reasons for the under reporting of traffic crashes include lack of police officers in the rural areas, reluctance of crash participants to notify police, and failure of local enforcement personnel to submit investigation forms to the Department of Public Safety.

The mean age of the injured victims of young driver crashes was slightly lower than that of the entire population of injured victims studied (25 vs. 30). Since the CrashCost estimates were based on national averages, the present discounted value of lost productivity for victims of young driver crashes would differ slightly from the value of lost productivity for victims of all crashes. The difference, however, is likely to be minor.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The factors contributing to Alaska's young driver crashes – youth, inexperience, and risk-taking behavior – are analogous to those seen in other states and countries. Currently there is no graduated licensing system in Alaska; however, legislation has been introduced and is currently under consideration during the 1997-98 legislative session. Alaska is also one of few states that does not require any instructional permit prior to obtaining a full privilege license. Graduated licensing has been shown to successfully reduce young driver crashes. It is recommended that Alaska adopt a graduated licensing system that is appropriate for Alaskans, to include the requirement of supervised driving under an instructional permit, a probational driving period, and raising the minimum age for full licensure to 17. The expected result would be a reduction in injuries and deaths, mitigation of the impact of crashes on Alaska's stretched emergency medical services, and a significant cost savings.

Alaska has a primary safety belt enforcement law for children under age 16 and secondary enforcement for those aged 16 and over. There is a helmet law for motorcyclists under age 18 and all motorcycle passengers. At the least, the primary safety belt law and the helmet law should be expanded to include young drivers through age 20 to protect those drivers at greatest risk. Even more effective are universal laws, i.e. mandated usage for all persons, which have been shown to increase belt usage 10-15% and helmet usage to 100% (10,11).

In the past three years Alaska has enacted two zero tolerance laws for young people under 21 years of age. A minor caught in possession of or consuming alcohol, regardless of motor vehicle involvement, can have his or her driver's license revoked. A minor also can be cited for "driving while intoxicated," for any level of alcohol registered on a breathalyzer test. These laws send an important message to young drivers about drinking and driving in a state that has a major problem with alcohol involvement relative to a great variety of injuries. Full commitment by state and local jurisdictions is needed to enforce these and all other traffic safety laws.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

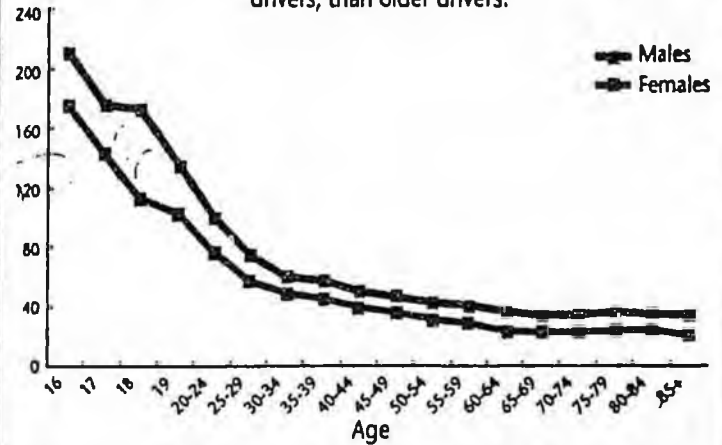
This study was based on a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), U.S. Department of Transportation. NHTSA has funded this research for the purpose of demonstrating the application and usefulness of linked data.

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### ACCIDENTS PER 1,000 LICENSED DRIVERS, 2000

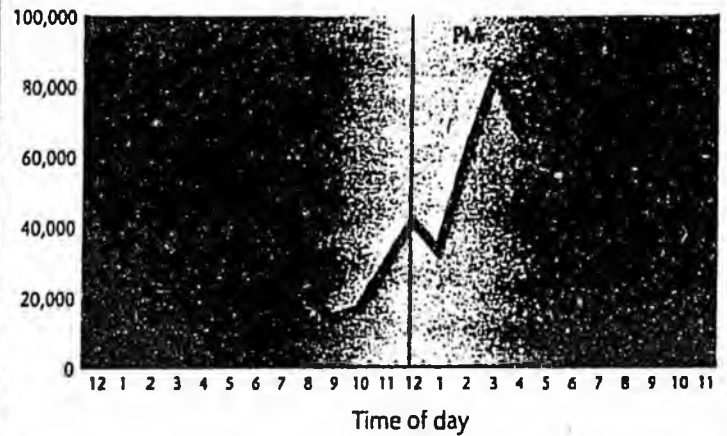
Teenagers, 16 to 18, are involved in more crashes per 1,000 licensed drivers, than older drivers.



Source: Journal of Safety Research, Vol. 34, No.1, National Safety Council, 2003.

### WHEN CAR ACCIDENTS ARE LIKELY TO HAPPEN TO TEENS

Sixteen- to 17-year-olds are involved in more crashes between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. than during daytime hours.



Source: Journal of Safety Research, Vol. 34, No.1, National Safety Council, 2003.

### GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING LAWS

States have been passing laws that ease teens into driving. The three important components of these GDL laws are:

1. A learner permit for at least six months.
  2. A required amount of supervised driving.
  3. An intermediate permit restricting night driving.
- Many states also limit the number of passengers.

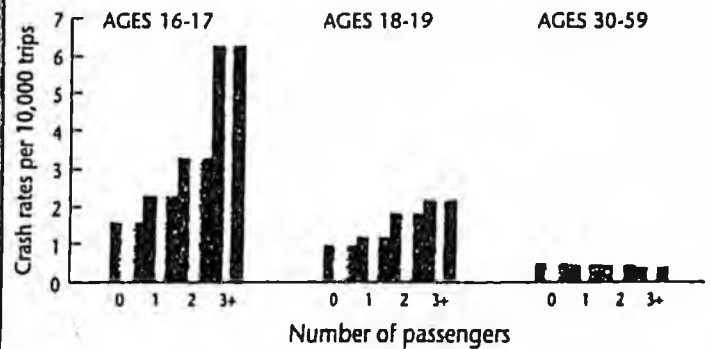


- One component
- Two components
- All three components
- ◇ Passenger restrictions

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures, December 2002

### TEEN DRIVING WITH PASSENGERS

For teen drivers, the presence of passengers results in higher crash rates per 10,000 trips. As the number of passengers increase, so does the accident rate.



Source: Journal of Safety Research, Vol. 34, No.1, National Safety Council, 2003.



| 1997-2001                       |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 121    | 44.0%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 69     | 25.1%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 88     | 32.0%        |
| Assault (homicide)              | 18     | 6.5%         |
| Total deaths                    | 275    | 100.0%       |

| 2001                            |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 23     | 43.4%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 13     | 24.5%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 16     | 30.2%        |
| Malignant neoplasms             | 3      | 5.7%         |
| Total deaths                    | 53     | 100.0%       |

| 2000                            |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 35     | 50.0%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 24     | 34.3%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 25     | 35.7%        |
| Assault (homicide)              | 2      | 2.9%         |
| Influenza and pneumonia         | 2      | 2.9%         |
| Total deaths                    | 70     | 100.0%       |

| 1999                            |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 19     | 35.2%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 11     | 20.4%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 16     | 29.6%        |
| Assault (homicide)              | 4      | 7.4%         |
| Malignant neoplasms             | 4      | 7.4%         |
| Total deaths                    | 54     | 100.0%       |

| 1998                            |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 20     | 45.5%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 7      | 15.9%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 18     | 40.9%        |
| Assault (homicide)              | 2      | 4.5%         |
| Total deaths                    | 44     | 100.0%       |

| 1997                            |        |              |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Cause of Death                  | Deaths | % All Deaths |
| Unintentional injuries          | 24     | 44.4%        |
| Motor Vehicle*                  | 14     | 25.9%        |
| Intentional self-harm (suicide) | 13     | 24.1%        |
| Assault (homicide)              | 8      | 14.8%        |
| Total deaths                    | 54     | 100.0%       |



S A V I N G T E E N A G E L I V E S

Section I

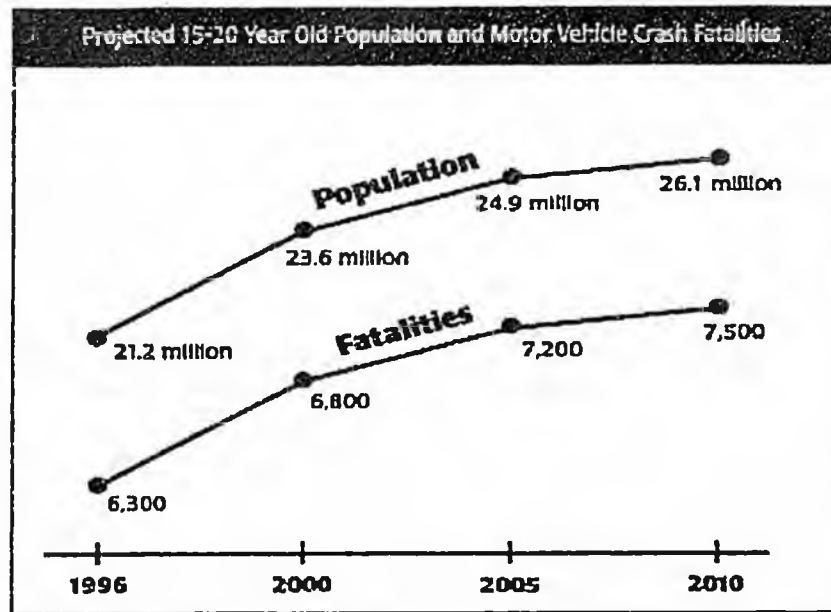
# Introduction: The Need for Graduated Driver Licensing

In 1996, 6,319 young people age 15-20 died in motor vehicle crashes. Even though this age group makes up only seven percent of the driving population, they are involved in 14 percent of all traffic fatalities.

## The Teen Driving Problem

It has been said many times that children are our most precious resource. While parents throughout time have loved their children enormously, today's parents have taken this saying to heart in more visible ways than previous generations. From the "CautionBaby on Board" window decals of the early 1980s to the ubiquitous "My child is an honor student at" bumper stickers of today, modern parents use the family car as a billboard to showcase their parental pride and their children's accomplishments.

But the same motor vehicle that goes from school to soccer to piano- in which Mom, Dad and the kids seem to livemay also be the vehicle in which our teenagers die. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for young people 15 to 20 years of age, causing roughly one-third of all fatalities in this age group. In 1996, 6,319 young people age 15-20 died in motor vehicle crashes. Even though this age group makes up only seven percent of the driving population, they are involved in 14 percent of all traffic fatalities. In 1996, teens were involved in more than two million non-fatal traffic crashes. Based on population projections, these numbers will go up unless we intervene. (See chart below.)



Source: AAA

On the basis of miles driven, teenagers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as are all drivers. Why do young drivers have such poor driving performance? Three factors work together to make the teen years so deadly for young drivers:

- Inexperience
- Risk-taking behavior and immaturity
- Greater risk exposure

**Inexperience:** All young drivers start out with very little knowledge or understanding of the complexities of driving a motor vehicle. Like any other skill, learning to drive well takes a lot of time. Technical ability, good judgment and experience all are needed to properly make the many continuous decisions, small and large, that add up to safe driving. By making it so easy to get a driver license by literally handing teenagers the car keys without requiring an extended period of supervised practice-driving time we are setting them up for the risk of making a fatal mistake.

**Risk-taking behavior and immaturity:** Adolescent impulsiveness is a natural behavior, but it results in poor driving judgment and participation in high-risk behaviors such as speeding, inattention, drinking and driving, and not using a seat belt. Peer pressure also often encourages risk taking.

**Greater risk exposure:** Teens often drive at night with other teens in the vehicle, factors that increase crash risk.

Teen drivers are different from other drivers, and their crash experience is different. Compared to other drivers, a higher proportion of teenagers are responsible for their fatal crashes because of their own driving errors:

- A larger percentage of fatal crashes involving teenage drivers are single-vehicle crashes compared to those involving other drivers. In this type of fatal crash, the vehicle usually leaves the road and overturns or hits a roadside object such as a tree or a pole.
- In general, a smaller percentage of teens wear their seat belts compared to other drivers.
- A larger proportion of teen fatal crashes involve speeding, or going too fast for road conditions compared to other drivers.
- More teen fatal crashes occur when passengers usually other teenagers are in the car than do crashes involving other drivers. Two out of three teens who die as passengers are in vehicles driven by other teenagers.

| Age   | All Crashes Per Million Miles | Fatal Crashes Per 100 Million Miles | All Crashes Per 1,000 Population | Fatal Crashes Per 100,000 Population |
|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16    | 43                            | 17                                  | 84                               | 33                                   |
| 17    | 30                            | 13                                  | 107                              | 42                                   |
| 18    | 16                            | 8                                   | 103                              | 51                                   |
| 19    | 14                            | 7                                   | 95                               | 48                                   |
| 20-19 | 20                            | 9                                   | 96                               | 44                                   |
| 20-24 | 10                            | 5                                   | 81                               | 41                                   |
| 25-29 | 6                             | 3                                   | 64                               | 33                                   |
| 30-34 | 5                             | 2                                   | 51                               | 26                                   |
| 35-39 | 4                             | 2                                   | 47                               | 23                                   |
| 40-44 | 4                             | 2                                   | 42                               | 20                                   |
| 45-49 | 4                             | 2                                   | 39                               | 18                                   |
| 50-54 | 4                             | 2                                   | 34                               | 18                                   |
| 55-59 | 4                             | 2                                   | 31                               | 16                                   |
| 60-64 | 4                             | 3                                   | 27                               | 16                                   |
| 65-69 | 7                             | 4                                   | 27                               | 16                                   |
| 70-74 | 8                             | 5                                   | 25                               | 17                                   |
| 75+   | 12                            | 12                                  | 18                               | 17                                   |

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (Transportation Research Board Circular #458 - April 1996)

Effective remedies exist for controlling these risk factors and reducing traffic crash fatalities among young drivers without seriously encroaching on their need to get around. Graduated driver licensing combines a number of measures proven to be effective in fostering safer driving behavior in young drivers. In Ontario, Canada, and in New Zealand where graduated driver licensing is in effect crash deaths and injuries for teenage drivers have been reduced. Maryland, which has a nighttime driving restriction, and California have shown reductions in both fatal crashes and traffic violations among young drivers.

With graduated driver licensing, new drivers typically go through a three-stage process that involves their gradual introduction to full driving privileges. By restricting when teenagers may drive, and with whom, graduated driver licensing allows new drivers to gain much-needed on-the-road experience in controlled, lower-risk settings. It also means that a teenager will be a little older and more mature when he or she gains a full, unrestricted license. After the

young driver demonstrates responsible driving behavior, restrictions are systematically lifted until the driver "graduates" to full driving privileges.

This manual explains what graduated driver licensing is and why it is so important for every jurisdiction to take steps towards its implementation.

[Fwd: HB 213]

**Subject:** [Fwd: HB 213]  
**Date:** Thu, 29 Jan 2004 13:14:04 -0900  
**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>  
**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature  
**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

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**Subject:** HB 213  
**Date:** Thu, 29 Jan 2004 08:30:33 -0900  
**From:** Pete & Cathie Mauro <alaskamauro@gci.net>  
**To:** Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

Do I support Graduated drivers licensing...ABSOLUTELY !! Automobile crashes are the leading cause of death for our children. In the last six years Alaska has lost 130 of our youth to traffic crashes...one of those 130 people was my daughter. That very day she was studying for her permit and missed her 15th birthday by days. We as a family are devastated by this loss and don't wish this to happen to another family. Do I think HB 213 will save lives..ABSOLUTELY !! Do I think practice and experience will save lives...ABSOLUTELY. This legislation will help give parents the tools to restrict their children from driving with the distraction of other teens in the car and the limit the times when teens are on the road and when that car should be parked in your driveway and your child be safe at home. Nothing good happens from 1-5 in the morning. In my mind, this is a no brainer...the message is pure and simple...this legislation SAVES LIVES. There is overwhelming data on this issue

"ROAD READY TEENS" ...YES!!!!  
Sincerely and Sadly  
Cathie Mauro

**Subject:** [Fwd: HB 213 Graduated Driver's License bill]

**Date:** Wed, 28 Jan 2004 13:42:16 -0900

**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>

**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature

**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

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**Subject:** HB 213 Graduated Driver's License bill

**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 20:28:40 -0900

**From:** Nancy Tankersley Fair <fairwinds@gci.net>

**To:** Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

**CC:** Con Bunde <Senator\_Con\_Bunde@legis.state.ak.us>,

Les Gara <Representative\_Les\_Gara@Legis.state.ak.us>,

Lesil McGuire <Representative\_Lesil\_McGuire@legis.state.ak.us>,

"Bob Lynn/Rep." <Representative\_Bob\_Lynn@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Rep. Weyhrauch:

As a mother of two teenagers, ages 15 and 19, and a victim of an accident caused by a teenage driver, I strongly support the Graduated Driver's Licensing bill.

We have instituted slightly stronger policies with our teens, to good results. However, it would be much better to have the same ground rules for all teens. As other states have shown, a system like this saves lives.

This is a very reasonable first step in making our roads safer. If the rural areas find this too restrictive, perhaps you can add a clause that makes this pertain only to larger communities with a bigger road system.

Thank you for sponsoring this important piece of safety legislation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Fair  
4741 E. 112th Avenue  
Anchorage, AK 99516

[Fwd: Graduated Drivers License Law - GDL]

**Subject: [Fwd: Graduated Drivers License Law - GDL]**

**Date: Tue, 27 Jan 2004 10:50:56 -0900**

**From: Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>**

**Organization: Alaska State Legislature**

**To: Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>**

---

**Subject: Graduated Drivers License Law - GDL**

**Date: Mon, 26 Jan 2004 18:18:35 -0900**

**From: Bill & Cindy Sims <simsfamily@gci.net>**

**To: Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us**

Hello Rep. Weyhrauch ... I am a parent of 3 teenagers here in Anchorage and wish to respond to the information I received pertaining to HB 213 you are sponsoring. I am in total support of this bill and ask that you continue to push to get this bill through to law.

I had heard rumors about this "restrictive" bill that was being proposed and after reading the actual proposed law, I was amazed that this law is actually very similar to restrictions I have given my own teenagers when they get their permit and driver's license. I have an 18 year old daughter, 16 year old son, and 14 year old daughter, and I have always been involved in our public schools and volunteer quite a bit at Dimond High -- so in other words, I am around teenagers quite a bit. One thing I have seen is that a lot of parents do not really think about adding restrictions to their teenagers when they obtain a license. Parents are busy and most actually look forward to when their child can drive to help out with getting them to and from sports, activities, etc. But we as parents need to look beyond our "conveniences" and realize that we have a responsibility to teach our young drivers. I have found that when you put more than one teenager in the car at a time things change -- the music is turned up, there are more distractions in the car, etc. We need to not only protect ourselves, but also those teenagers whose parents are not aware of the additional dangers that are associated with new young drivers.

Thank you for your support of HB 213. Please feel free to use this e-mail in support of the Alaska Graduated Driver's Licensing Law.

Cindy Sims  
907.344.7748 or [simsfamily@gci.net](mailto:simsfamily@gci.net)

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capital Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
465-2273

Dear Representative Weyhrauch:

Thank you for introducing HB213.

Considering that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15-18 year olds, something must be done. I believe that young people should be introduced to the driving experience gradually by phasing in full driving privileges over time and in lower-risk settings. Your bill would help to achieve this... thereby saving the lives of our teenage drivers and their passengers.

You have my total support.

| <u>NAME</u>         | <u>ADDRESS</u>                             | <u>SIGNATURE</u>    |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| Brenda Sadler       | P.O. Box 57045<br>North Pole 99705         | Brenda Sadler       |
| Perry J. Williamson | 1221 Lois Lane<br>Fairbanks, AK 99702      | Perry J. Williamson |
| Santra Trumbauer    | P.O. Box 81305<br>Fairbanks AK 99708       | Santra Trumbauer    |
| Gabrielle Lorry     | 1853 Bridgewater Dr<br>Fairbanks, AK 99708 | Gabrielle Lorry     |
| BILL LARRY          | 1853 BRIDGE WATER DR                       | Bill Lorry          |
| LINDA L. PEARSON    | 3252 HELEN PL<br>FAIRBANKS, AK 99709       | Linda L. Pearson    |

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Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
465-2273

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You have my total support.

Sincerely,

name Ronald F. Taylor

organization

address 1090 North Salem Drive

city/state/zip Anchorage, Alaska 99508

telephone (907) 770-1843

email RFT1@edlmail.com

*Ronald F. Taylor*

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
465-2273

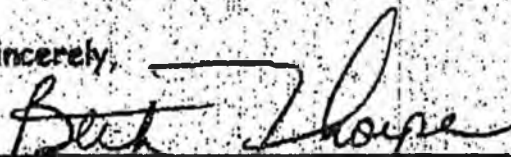
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You have my total support.

Sincerely,



name Beth Thorne  
organization Alaska Injury Prevention Center  
address 3701 F Tudor, Ste. 105  
city/state/zip Anchorage, AK 99521  
telephone 929-3939  
email

Rep. Bruce Weyrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
465-2273

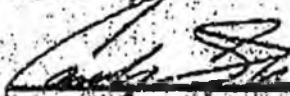
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You have my total support.

Sincerely,

  
name Coelene Stevens  
organization Anchorage Police Dept.  
address 4501 S. Braganza  
city/state/zip Anchorage, AK 99507  
telephone 781-8749  
email cstevens@ci.anchorage.ak.us

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
465-2273


Dear Representative Weyrauch:

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You have my total support.

Sincerely,

  
name Sam O'Connor  
organization Sustainable Community Patrol  
address 4930 Laurel #14  
city/state/zip Anch AK 99507  
telephone 227-5157  
email sam.oconnor@psl.net



**MADD**  
Activism Victim Services Education™

Anchorage Chapter  
4105 Turnagain Boulevard, Suite A • Anchorage, AK 99517  
(907) 562-6890/Fax (907) 562-6896  
Email: [info@maddalaska.com](mailto:info@maddalaska.com)  
Visit our Web Site: [www.maddalaska.com](http://www.maddalaska.com)

Our Mission is to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime and prevent underage drinking

January 27, 2004

Representative Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Weyhrauch,

I am writing on behalf of the Anchorage Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving in support of HB 213, Graduated Drivers Licensing.

This bill allows young, inexperienced drivers extra time to gain critical experience behind the wheel without the distractions of other youth in the vehicle, and also emphasizes the increased risk of driving during the late night/early morning hours.

Approximately four years ago, MADD participated in a series of youth forums during which young people 14-17 years of age, who discussed teen driving behaviors. The top reason they indicated for teen crashes was inattention, and they went on to describe the inattention as the result of paying attention to conversations and actions of their friends in the vehicle with them, including physically turning their head from the roadway to join in talk or actions going on around them.

Thank you, Representative Weyhrauch, for providing this step toward increasing the safety of Alaska's teen drivers.

Sincerely,

*Marti Greeson*

Marti Greeson  
Executive Director  
MADD Anchorage Chapter

**Subject:** [Fwd: HB 213]  
**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 10:54:59 -0900  
**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>  
**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature  
**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

---

**Subject:** HB 213  
**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 08:03:26 -0900  
**From:** "Michael Frost" <akshltzu@hotmail.com>  
**To:** Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

Hello!

I am glad to see this type of legislation restricting the driving of a new driver for the first 6 months. This is exactly what I had implemented with my own son who is now 17 and my daughter will be 16 in a month and she will be restricted also.

I came up with this idea because I was hit 23 years ago by a new teen driver on her lunch break from school, with 3 other teens in the car with her. She ran a red light, totalled both cars and sent me and a couple of her friends to the doctor. I still suffer today from the injuries I recieved in that accident that may have been avoided if she had not been distracted with her friends in the car.

Nice going Mr. Weyrauch!

I hope this bill passes!

---

Michael Frost  
Boreal Shelties  
8326 Blackberry St.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502  
Phone: (907) 248-0055  
<http://mywebpage.netscape.com/BorealShelties/homepage.html>  
E-Mail: akshltzu@hotmail.com

Shetland Sheepdog Club of Anchorage - Board Member & Show Chairperson  
Alaska Kennel Club - Show Committee Member  
Alyeska Canine Trainers - Puppy Obedience Instructor

Home to:  
BIS Canada 2000, BISS, Am/Can CH Singltree Irresistible (1996-2003)  
BIS Canada 2003, Am/Can CH Boreal Ring My Bell  
Boreal Cafe' Kaladi  
Beckward Dustcatcher  
Simco Against All Odds  
Skyview Storm Chaser  
Boreal High Speed Traveler

**Subject:** [Fwd: Graduated Drivers License Law - GDL]  
**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 10:50:56 -0900  
**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>  
**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature  
**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

---

**Subject:** Graduated Drivers License Law - GDL  
**Date:** Mon, 26 Jan 2004 18:18:35 -0900  
**From:** Bill & Cindy Sims <simsfamily@gci.net>  
**To:** Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

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Thank you for your support of HB 213. Please feel free to use this e-mail in support of the Alaska Graduated Driver's Licensing Law.

Cindy Sims  
907.344.7748 or [simsfamily@gci.net](mailto:simsfamily@gci.net)

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**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 10:54:59 -0900

**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>

**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature

**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

---

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Nice going Mr. Weyrauch!

I hope this bill passes!

---

Michael Frost  
Boreal Shelties  
8326 Blackberry St.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502  
Phone: (907) 248-0055  
<http://mywebpage.netscape.com/BorealShelties/homepage.html>  
E-Mail: akshltzu@hotmail.com

Shetland Sheepdog Club of Anchorage - Board Member & Show Chairperson  
Alaska Kennel Club - Show Committee Member  
Alyeska Canine Trainers - Puppy Obedience Instructor

Home to:

BIS Canada 2000, BISS, Am/Can CH Singltree Irresistible (1996-2003)

BIS Canada 2003, Am/Can CH Boreal Ring My Bell

Boreal Cafe' Kaladi

Beckward Dustcatcher

Simco Against All Odds

Skyview Storm Chaser

Boreal High Speed Traveler

**Subject: [Fwd: Graduated Driver's Licensing Law]**

**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 10:42:19 -0900

**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>

**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature

**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

---

**Subject: Graduated Driver's Licensing Law**

**Date:** Tue, 27 Jan 2004 09:02:47 -0900

**From:** "June Bewley" <ajb@da-insurance.com>

**Organization:** Denali Alaskan Insurance

**To:** <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us>

**CC:** "June Bewley" <ajb@da-insurance.com>

A resounding YES to the 3 stages enumerated in the brief I received this morning. Obviously, lack of experience is the prime contributor to crashes.

Please vote to enact the staged GDL as soon as possible!

Will the teens who already have their licenses be "grandfathered in"?

Please make the law effective as soon as possible:

Thank you,

June Bewley

**Subject: HB213**

**Date:** Mon, 26 Jan 2004 19:16:06 -0900

**From:** "Robin Near" <rnear@alaska.net>

**To:** <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative Weyrauch,

Having lived in AK for almost 33 years, I have known several families devastated by the deaths of their loved ones in vehicular accidents. Many involved teenagers who were inexperienced and not ready to drive. I raised two boys here and gladly paid for approved driver's training courses before allowing them to drive. Even that didn't seem enough. I am appalled that anyone 16 years of age can obtain a driver's license with no education or driving experience...all they need do is pass a simple written and driving test.

Your bill regarding a Graduated Driving License makes tremendous sense to those of us who know that the way one learns to become a good driver is *only by time & experience*. No one should learn such a complex skill by practicing on other drivers. It's time our state took responsibility for safer roads for all, by making youthful drivers regard driving for what it really is; *a serious responsibility!* The best way to guarantee this, is for youth to earn the privilege thru a series of checks. Thirty five other states have proven that it works by lower death and injury rates. What in the world are we waiting for? I hope your cohorts realize how many lives could be saved and how much needless suffering could be avoided by implementing a graduated drivers license law. Thank you for your insight and willingness to try and make a big difference for families in Alaska.

Sincerely, Robin Near  
P.O. Box 80847  
Fairbanks, AK 99708

January 26, 2004

Pete Eagan  
699 Yak Road  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Re: HB 213

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Weyrauch:

I am a life-long Alaskan (49 years), and am familiar with many a tragedy on our highways and roads. Thank you for introducing HB213. I believe that it is a very good bill. Some opponents might argue that it will be an inconvenience for families with young drivers, but our families' lives are certainly worth a little inconvenience.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15-18 year olds. Statistics in other states have clearly shown a significant reduction in the number of accidents and fatalities in the teen driving ranks following the institution of similar GDL legislation. It makes very good sense to phase in full driving privileges over a relatively short period of time. Experience can be rapidly gained while the young driver is free of many distractions that are currently the norm (e.g. late hours, rowdy peers in the vehicle, possible underage drinking, etc.).

This is a very sound and responsible bill. I heartily support it, and I hope that our Interior legislators do too.

Sincerely,

PETE EAGAN

Pete Eagan  
451-5462 w  
455-4793 h

[Fwd: GDL legislation]

**Subject:** [Fwd: GDL legislation]  
**Date:** Mon, 26 Jan 2004 16:12:31 -0900  
**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>  
**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature  
**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

---

**Subject:** GDL legislation  
**Date:** Mon, 26 Jan 2004 11:04:01 -0900  
**From:** "L J Rowinski" <ffljr@aurora.uaf.edu>  
**To:** representative\_bruce\_weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

Thank you for your good work on this bill. The people whose lives are spared will never know they were in danger; but, you know and I know that we are everyone of us at risk. Thank you, Christi Rowinski, 479-5317  
ffljr@uaf.edu

**Subject: Letter of support for HB 213**

**Date: Mon, 26 Jan 2004 17:25:30 -0800 (PST)**

**From: Linda Pearson <lpearson18@yahoo.com>**

**To: terry.harvey@legis.state.ak.us**

Hi Terry:

This is the letter I tried unsuccessfully to fax....

<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

January 26, 2004

Representative Bruce Weyhrauch

State Capitol Building- Room 30

<?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarts" />Juneau, Alaska  
99801

Dear Representative Weyhrauch,

Thank you for sponsoring and supporting House Bill 213- the Graduated Drivers License proposal. As a high school counselor for 30 years in the Fairbanks area, I had the opportunity to observe teens driving on a daily basis. Every day I saw kids showing off to their peers by speeding, gunning their engines, jumping stop signs, even challenging and racing other drivers and threatening pedestrians (playfully, of course). And this was before and after school in a school parking lot. This risky driving extends to the roads we all use.

As a proponent of safety, I practiced a type of GDL with my own children. They got their permits after their sophomore years, practiced driving with me for a year and a summer, and took a drivers' ed class before taking their licensing tests. I know that lots of practice under safe driving conditions helps novice drivers become good drivers and avoid risky behaviors.

Other states that have adopted GDLs have seen a reduction in teen accidents, deaths and injuries. Insurance companies also recognize the dangers posed by inexperienced drivers in the form of higher rates for young drivers.

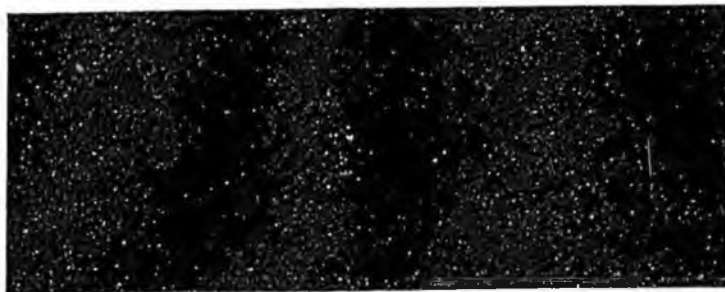
Thank you for your concern for all drivers and for promoting HB 213.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Pearson

3252 Helen Place

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709



---

Do you Yahoo!?  
Yahoo! SiteBuilder - Free web site building tool.  
Try it!

**Subject: Support of HB 213**

**Date: Mon, 26 Jan 2004 10:31:36 -0900**

**From: Debbie Manning <dmanning@northstar.k12.ak.us>**

**To: Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us**

Dear Rep Weyrauch,

I lost my daughter on March 26, 2003 in a traffic accident on the Parks Highway. She got her driving permit at age 14 and her driver's license at age 16. I tried to prepare her as best I could for all driving experiences by driving with her whenever possible. When she was on her own though or with friends, I know she didn't always follow the rules. She was a typical driver of her age group -- driving too fast and taking too many chances because she believed nothing could ever happen to her. At age 20 she was finally getting some experience under her belt and driving more defensively; however, she never got a chance to improve any more. She was in a head-on collision. I still don't know the cause of the accident but I believe it was a combination of lack of attention and inability to read road conditions correctly. Perhaps if she would have had a more restrictive driver's license from the beginning, she would have been more aware of her limited experience and taken more precautions. It's too late for her, but maybe this bill will save other young people.

Debbie Manning  
North Pole, AK

*Debbie Manning, Human Resources Technician  
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District  
(907)452-2000, ext 381  
<http://www.northstar.k12.ak.us>*

Re: HB 213 - Graduated Driver's License

**Subject: Re: HB 213 - Graduated Driver's License**

**Date: Mon, 26 Jan 2004 11:49:10 -0900**

**From: "Don Henry" <donhenry@mtaonline.net>**

**To: "Linda Sylvester" <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>**

I live in Palmer and the road conditions are anything but small town driving, plus a large percentage of our yearly driving is spent with winter (dark, snowy, icy) road conditions. I think adding the 50-hour instruction step with nighttime driving limited is a good one, but it should include or be in addition to a driver's ed (defensive driving) course. Here in the Valley, Community Schools offers a 4-week program (8 hours a week) that costs (if I remember right) \$80. They have simulated modeled driving situations that prepares new (young) drivers to be defensive, responsible drivers. Instead of (or in addition to) legislating more laws, I think the State government should put forth effort (money) for new driver training courses. If the driver's ed course was available more often, most parents can afford the \$80. Right now though there is limited space and the program is offered twice during the school year. So I do support the GDL bill but think there is room for improvement. One comment on the 6-month period that requires the presence of a parent or an over-21 adult, but allows for the driver to drive with two siblings (without a parent or over-21 adult it appears). This does not make sense, if I'm understanding it right. Thank you for allowing me to comment. Sincerely, Carole Henry, 25346 E. Buckshot Lane, Palmer, AK 99645 (907) 745-6578

**Subject: Limiting Teenaged Drivers**

Date: Mon, 19 Jan 2004 03:17:29 +0000

From: "Jeanne Baker" <skreech29@hotmail.com>

To: Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

Mr. Weyhrauch;

A friend of mine suggested I contact you regarding this state's young drivers. I work for the local electric company as a meter technician. I am on the road all day every day reading meters and connecting and disconnecting electricity. I drive in town on busy streets, on the highways and on low traffic country roads, flats and hills. I am on the road in every weather condition Mother Nature can come up with. My job puts me in contact with many, many other drivers, young ones, old ones, good ones and bad ones. I cannot tell you how many times I have yielded to young drivers in order to avoid an accident, even though I had right of way. I have been cut off, nearly run off the road and been the recipient of many rude gestures when I honk to let a fellow driver know that he is a little too close or has not yielded when he was supposed to. The majority of these incidents have been young men, although there have been a few mature men, a few girls and women. Most older drivers are slower, but stay in the slow lanes and stay home in bad weather.

I have 2 grown children and did allow them to drive at 16 years old. I did not, however, allow them to transport a car full of kids, only an occasional one in an emergency, and they had curfews. They had to drive a full summer before I even thought of allowing them on the road. I used to take them to the school parking lot only when it was totally clear and have them slam on the brakes so they could learn how it felt if they skidded on the highway. We were only going about 20 MPH...but the effect was there. All this was done in a conscientious way so as to assure that they would not be a hazard on the road. They are in their mid-thirties now and have each had one speeding ticket, both in high school, and are very good drivers today.

I truly believe that if a program limiting teenaged kids was in effect, it would make the roads much safer for everyone. Of course, there would have to be stipulations for working teens...but the majority would be restricted in some ways. I really think this would give them a chance to mature a little bit and be a better driver and less of a hazard on the public roadways.

Sincerely,

Jeanne L. Daniel

---

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<http://wine.msn.com/>

**Subject: boating safety and GDL**

**Date: Wed, 26 Mar 2003 21:35:40 -0900**

**From: Perkins <perkins@ak.net>**

**To: Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us**

Dear Representative Weyhrauch,

I'm impressed with your involvement with several safety issues. I'm an Eagle River constituent and an injury epidemiologist (I study injury patterns in various communities and populations). I have lived in Alaska for 25 years, 8 of which were in Dillingham. My injury prevention work with the U.S. Public Health Service took me to communities throughout Alaska before my retirement in 1998. I'm writing to encourage you in your support of HB93, to keep the Boating Safety Law active and in place. As you know, this Law brings in about \$600,000 of federal funds each year and the hardship on individuals is a miniscual \$10 registration fee every 3 years. It helps pay for flotation devices which are used on Kids Don't Float loaner boards throughout Anchorage and Alaska. It is a good law with huge positive impacts on the safety of all Alaskans and a very small impact on individuals. I introduced and encouraged the use of Float Coats throughout rural Alaska in the mid-seventies, and now they are used as the rule rather than the exception.

The other very positive legislation you are developing is the strengthening of the Graduated Driver's Licensing requirement for new drivers. Teens are 4 times more likely to die in a motor vehicle crash than their adult counterparts. Much of this increased risk is due to inexperience, lower seat belt useage, and alcohol. Teens rarely get into crashes when they are learning to drive with an adult present. Their risks increase tremendously shortly after they go solo, drive with other teens in the car, and drive after midnight. The good GDL laws that have been inacted in other states and countries have cut the teen crashes in half. They demand that teens have 6 months behind the wheel under an adult's supervision, no other non-family passengers, and no driving after midnight. Motor vehicles related injuries are the leading cause of death for our teens and we must see that they recieve the proper experience before turning them loose on the roads. School based driver's education has been shown to be ineffective, FYI.

I'm currently the Exec. Director of a non-profit injury prevention center and my special interest is to reduce the needless deaths and trauma from preventable injuries. If I can be of technical assitance to you on any injury prevention issues, please call 907-929-3941.

Ron Perkins, MPH

**CAPITAL CHEVROLET**  
**ROB SKINNER**

5245 GLACIER HWY  
JUNEAU, AK 99801

April 28, 2003

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch

Dear Rep. Weyhrauch:

I'm pleased to add my support to HB 213, "Provisional Driver's License for Teen Drivers". Being the father of six up and coming drivers and as the "Managing Partner" for Capital Chevrolet I feel the up side to this bill clearly outweighs the small inconveniences that would result from it.

While growing up in a small town in Oregon several of my classmates were in serious car accidents, resulting in two fatalities, two friends who are permanently paralyzed and several other injuries of varying degrees. Most likely had a bill like this been in place my friends would be alive today and those paralyzed would not be so.

In my business we see every day the young drivers and their behaviors. We experience losses from minor accidents as a course of business but almost never from an older more mature employee. It is almost without exception that young drivers feel a need to push the envelope when the rush of power and freedom is afforded them associated with driving. I myself experienced it and so has every one who has been behind the wheel of a car. My sales persons are continually reminding our younger potential car owners to watch the traffic laws while on test drives.

While I'm a huge fan of our youth and understand that HB 213 will disappoint a few, the facts are clear, accidents will decrease and lives will be saved. Nothing is more important to a father than that.

Sincerely,

Rob Skinner  
Owner, Capital Chevrolet

Rep. Bruce Weyhrauch  
Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
January 25, 2004

Al Near  
POB 80847  
Fairbanks, AK 99708

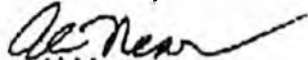
Dear Representative Weyrauch:

Thank you for introducing HB213.

Considering that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15-18 year olds, something must be done. I believe that young people should be introduced to the driving experience gradually by phasing in full driving privileges over time and in lower-risk settings. Your bill would help to achieve this... thereby saving the lives of our teenage drivers and their passengers.

You have my total support.

Sincerely,

  
Al Near

**Subject:** gdl

**Date:** Sun, 25 Jan 2004 18:42:24 -0900

**From:** "Rhammond" <chickencoop@starband.net>

**To:** <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

Dear Representative Weyrauch,

please know that our entire family is very supportive of the GDL. We urge you to do all you can to help it pass. The lives saved will be worth it.

Thank you, Robin & Dick Hammond of Chicken, AK 99732

[Fwd: Bill to change drivers licenses]

**Subject:** [Fwd: Bill to change drivers licenses]  
**Date:** Fri, 11 Apr 2003 21:05:33 -0800  
**From:** Bruce Weyhrauch <Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@Legis.state.ak.us>  
**Organization:** Alaska State Legislature  
**To:** Linda Sylvester <Linda\_Sylvester@legis.state.ak.us>

bill file

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**Subject:** Bill to change drivers licenses  
**Date:** Fri, 11 Apr 2003 12:55:05 -0800  
**From:** Craig <craig4@gci.net>  
**To:** Representative\_Bruce\_Weyhrauch@legis.state.ak.us

Bruce – Just wanted to get a few comments in on the bill to change drivers' licenses. Hopefully it's not too late. I think the "stepped system" for drivers' licenses is a good idea but is too extreme. As a minimum, a newly licensed teen should be able to participate in family responsibilities and at least be able to transport their own siblings who have probably been riding with them throughout the permit period. I also don't see a problem with teens giving a ride to 1 or 2 friends while driving to and from school, or to after school activities such as to the track field. Since we live 20 miles from the high school and are constantly trying to carpool, it seems absurd that 3 kids from our area would all drive separately, or 1 drive and leave the others to catch the bus which leaves almost an hour and a half before school starts. I think the purpose of MADD should be to keep car-loads of teens off the road while "cruising" on a Saturday night, not to punish responsible teens who are driving to and from school and activities. Again, if the rule under the new bill is for teens to not drive with others under the age of 25, please at least have an exemption for family members riding in the car. Thank you for considering this.

JoAnne Craig

789-2955

*Sent email*



**CITY/BOROUGH OF JUNEAU  
ALASKA'S CAPITAL CITY**

**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

Telephone: (907) 586-5240; Facsimile: (907) 586-5385  
[Sally\\_Smith@ci.juneau.ak.us](mailto:Sally_Smith@ci.juneau.ak.us)

April 23, 2003

The Honorable Bruce Weyhrauch  
Alaska State Representative  
State Capitol, Room 102  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Weyhrauch:

Juneau's assembly members have read an analysis of your House Bill 213, which would institute a graduated driver's license program. According to statistics provided by the Juneau Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), 3,889 of Alaska's youth between the ages of 16 and 20 were involved in traffic accidents during 2000. This is not acceptable, and begs the need for change.

We care about our youth and recognize that our current system of preparing them to drive is not working. House Bill 213 provides an opportunity to responsibly prepare our young Alaskan's for a lifetime of safe driving. You have the support of the City and Borough of Juneau on this important legislation. It can make the roads safer for all.

Sincerely,

  
Sally Smith  
Mayor

cc: Cindy Cashen, MADD  
The Honorable Kim Elton  
The Honorable Beth Kerttula  
CBJ Assembly  
Clark Gruening  
Jerry Mackie



**JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

10014 CRAZY HORSE DRIVE • JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-8529 • (907) 463-1700 • FACSIMILE (907) 463-1712

**APR 29 2003**

April 25, 2003

The Honorable Bruce Weyhrauch  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Weyhrauch:

Thank you for your sponsorship of House Bill 213 to establish a graduated driver's license program for Alaska. As I mentioned on Tuesday, the Juneau School Board unanimously supports this concept. I've written the members of the House Transportation Committee and hope they are responsive.

I'm glad to see that there are positive developments for Alyeska Correspondence School. Thank you for your continued support for education and for the Juneau Community in this matter.

Sincerely,

  
Peggy Cowan  
Superintendent



*Gimme Five!*

## Mayor's Task Force On Youth

*"Each youth in Juneau can  
identify at least five caring  
adults who are concerned  
about their success"*

February 22, 2004

Representative Bruce Weyhrauch  
State Capital, Room 102  
Juneau AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Weyhrauch,

The undersigned members of Juneau's Mayor's Task Force on Youth would like to express our concern about the risks facing young drivers in Alaska and our support of measures that mitigate those risks. We are aware that other states in our nation have devised programs that allow young people to steadily develop their driving skills with more safeguards in place to protect their own well-being, as well as those around them.

Alaskans under the age of 21 are involved in the highest percentage of traffic crashes in our state. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people from age 15 through 18 years old throughout our nation, and the fatality rate for young drivers is approximately 4 times as high as older drivers. We would like to see our state do a better job at protecting these young lives.

We are fully supportive of measures that:

- Increase the amount of properly supervised behind-the-wheel driver education.
- Provide for greater preparation for and restrictions on night-time driving
- Place restrictions on the number of youth passengers young drivers can transport.
- Require young people to maintain a clean driving record before their level of driving privileges increase.
- Encourage young people to develop safe driving habits and experience.

Studies into the effectiveness of similar measures in other states and countries have shown significant reductions in the number of teenage crashes. As members of agencies dedicated to the health and well being of youth, we encourage all efforts that help them safely negotiate the passage into the world of adult responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Juneau School Board

Zach Gordon Teen Club



*Gimme Five!*

## Mayor's Task Force On Youth

*"Each youth in Juneau can  
identify at least five caring  
adults who are concerned  
about their success"*

Boys and Girls Club

*Elizabeth Williams*

Association of Alaska School Boards

*Sharon Young*

Alaska Faith Communities Concerned for Children

*Shelley Eidness*

Echo Ranch/Campus Life

*Randy Beaverson*

Mothers Against Drunk Driving

*Cindy Cashen*

Southeast Alaska Guidance Association

*Anita Hazue Passin*

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

*Matt Felix*

4-H Club

*Mike ...*

Juneau Youth Services

*Walter Majors*