

SAFER

SAFER ACCESS FOR EVERYONE ON THE ROADWAYS



SAFER FOR
CHILDREN

SAFER FOR
TEENS

SAFER FOR
HIGHWAY WORKERS

SAFER FOR YOU



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is good news and bad news to share on safety public policy issues in Missouri. First, the bad news. Lack of helmet use when riding or operating a motorcycle continues to be a significant factor in the number of motorcyclist fatalities and serious injuries. In August 2020, Missouri's mandatory all-rider helmet law was repealed. The year before the law was repealed, Missouri experienced 11 unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities. By 2023, there were 73. Overall, motorcyclist fatalities in Missouri increased from 121 in 2019 to 171 in 2023, a record high. This is simply unacceptable.

But these aren't just numbers. Every time someone chooses to ride without a helmet and experiences a fatal crash, that's someone's son, daughter, father, or mother that doesn't come home. It's a choice with potentially life-changing consequences. Motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 69% and reduce the risk of death by 42%, and unfortunately, Missouri has seen the opposite play out since the all-rider helmet law was repealed.

We strongly believe said public policy saves lives and creates a culture in which dangerous behaviors are considered unacceptable. That is why, when it comes to motorcycle safety, we are renewing our call to reinstate Missouri's all-rider helmet law – requiring all motorcycle riders, regardless of age, to wear a helmet that meets or exceeds U.S. DOT standards.

Motorcyclists aren't the only ones at risk. Missouri experienced 991 traffic fatalities last year, with 64% of the vehicle occupants killed being unbuckled. In addition, 129 pedestrians and 15 bicyclists were killed in Missouri traffic crashes. Making the choice to wear a seat belt is a simple action that can save lives and so is slowing down and sharing the road with pedestrians and bicyclists.

It's not all bad news. The 991 fatalities in 2023 represents a 6% decrease from 2022, a small step in the right direction. Also in 2023, the General Assembly passed the Siddens-Bening Hands-Free Law. This law bans the use of handheld electronic devices for all drivers, regardless of age. We are incredibly proud to see such steps taken to help eliminate distracted driving crashes in Missouri.

We are stepping forward again this legislative session to educate policy makers and the public on the impacts of public policy and saving lives in Missouri. This document is a call to action. It outlines the state's current statutes as well as proposals for public policy changes that would make a difference by keeping more Missourians safe and alive. It focuses on four key areas of roadway safety: Our Children, Our Teens, Our Highway Workers, and You. These proposals individually will not solve this crisis, but each represents a meaningful step forward to eliminate traffic fatalities.

Together, we can provide safer access for everyone on Missouri's roadways.



W. Dustin Boatwright
Chairman, Missouri Highways and
Transportation Commission

EXISTING POLICIES

- ✓ BAC License Revocation
- ✓ Good Samaritan
- ✓ In-Person License Renewal
- ✓ Medical Review Board
- ✓ GDL Holding Period
- ✓ Child Endangerment
- ✓ Hands-Free for All Drivers
- ✗ Rear Facing Through Age 2 *
- ✗ Booster Seat *
- ✗ Children Left in Hot Cars *
- ✗ Bicycle Helmets for Young Riders
- ✗ Cell Phone Ban for Teens and Novice Drivers
- ✗ GDL Young Passenger Restriction
- ✗ GDL Nighttime Restriction
- ✗ GDL Stronger Supervised Driving Requirement
- ✗ GDL Minimum Age 16 for Learner's Permit
- ✗ GDL Age 18 for Unrestricted License
- ✗ Automated Enforcement
- ✗ Endangerment of a Highway Worker *
- ✗ Ignition Interlock *
- ✗ Open Container *
- ✗ Primary Seat Belt *
- ✗ Motorcycle Helmets
- ✗ Electric Bicycles

* Legislation filed in 2024



SAFER FOR CHILDREN

Rear Facing Through Age 2

- Infants and toddlers should remain in a rear facing child restraint system in the rear seat from birth through age 2 or longer. After the child reaches the maximum weight and height limit for the rear facing safety seat, the child may be placed in a forward-facing safety seat.
- In the past 5 years, 11 passenger occupants under the age of 2 were killed in Missouri traffic crashes. Another 57 passenger occupants under the age of 2 were seriously injured.
- When used properly, car seats reduce fatal injury by 71% for infants and 54% for toddlers in passenger cars.¹

Booster Seat

- Children who have outgrown the height and weight limit of a forward-facing safety seat should be placed in a booster seat until the child can properly use the vehicle's seat belt when the child reaches 57 inches in height and age 8.
- In the past 5 years, there were 25 vehicle occupant fatalities and 182 serious injuries of children ages 4-7 in Missouri.

Children Left in Hot Cars

- This proposal would prohibit drivers from leaving a child under the age of 8 unattended in a vehicle when the conditions result in injury or death to the child.
- In 2022, 33 children have died from pediatric vehicular heatstroke in the USA, below the national yearly average of 38. Missouri has had 27 children die in hot cars from 1998 to 2022.²

Bicycle Helmets for Young Riders

- Enact legislation to require all bicycle riders under the age of 18 to wear a helmet.
- Over the past 10 years, bicyclist fatalities have more than doubled in Missouri.
- Bicycle helmets can reduce the risk of head injury by 60% and brain injury by 58%.³

1 DOT HS 809 823 (nhtsa.gov)
2 No Heat Stroke (noheatstroke.org)
3 State-Report.PDF (nsc.org)
4 Distracted Driving | Missouri Department of Transportation (savemolives.com)
5 FINAL-2022-Roadmap-of-State-Highway-Safety-Laws.pdf (saferoads.org)
6 Graduated Licensing Calculator (iihs.org)
7 Teen Safe Driving: How Teens Can Be Safer Drivers | NHTSA (nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving)
8 Graduated Licensing Calculator (iihs.org)
9 FINAL-2022-Roadmap-of-State-Highway-Safety-Laws.pdf (saferoads.org)
10 BUPD Distracted Driving Infographic.pdf (modot.org)



SAFER FOR TEENS

Cell Phone Ban for Teens & Novice Drivers

- This proposal would prohibit all drivers under the age of 18 or any driver operating under an instruction permit or an intermediate license from using a cellular device for any purpose except for communications in an emergency.
- Distraction contributes to many Missouri crashes and cell phone use is a leading cause of distraction. Someone other than the distracted driver is killed over 50% of the time.⁴
- 8% of drivers 15- to 20-years-old involved in a fatal crash were reported distracted at the time of the crash in 2023.⁵

GDL Young Passenger Restriction

- This proposal would restrict drivers operating under a graduated driver license (GDL) from having more than one passenger under the age of 21 in their vehicle who is not part of their immediate household.
- Teen driver-involved fatalities increased 14% from 2021 to 2023 in Missouri.
- For 16- and 17-year-old drivers, research shows a 15% reduction in fatal crash rates associated with a limit of no more than one teen passenger when compared to no limit.⁶

GDL Nighttime Restriction

- This proposal would expand current law in Missouri to restrict drivers operating under a GDL from operating between the hours of 10:00 pm and 5:00 am without adult supervision unless traveling to or from a school activity, job, or emergency.
- The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety estimates that Missouri could see a 7% reduction in fatal crashes for teens 15-17 if this measure is adopted.⁷
- Over the last 5 years, 26% of fatal crashes in Missouri involving teen drivers 15-17 occurred between 8:00 pm and 11:59 pm. (-or- 43% of fatal crashes in Missouri involving teen drivers 15-17 occurred between 10:00 pm and 5:00 am. This timeframe matches the nighttime restrictions.)

GDL Stronger Supervised Driving Requirement

- This proposal would expand the current requirement for those operating under a GDL to require an additional 10 hours of instruction from an adult licensed driver to obtain an unrestricted driver's license.
- Car crashes are the leading cause of death for teens, largely due to immaturity and lack of driving skills and experience.⁸

GDL Minimum Age 16 for Learner's Permit

- This proposal would increase the minimum age a person may qualify for a temporary instruction permit from 15 to 16 years old.
- The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety estimates that Missouri could see a 13% reduction in fatal crashes for teens 15-17 if this measure is adopted.⁹

GDL Age 18 for Unrestricted License

- This proposal would extend the passenger restrictions and nighttime driving restrictions for individuals operating under a GDL until the age of 18. At that time, an unrestricted license could be obtained.
- In states that have adopted GDL programs, studies have found overall crash reductions among teen drivers of about 10% to 30%.¹⁰



SAFER FOR WORKERS

Hands-Free for All Drivers

- This proposal would prohibit all hand-held use of cell phones while driving for all drivers except for instances of making emergency phone calls, starting navigation services with a single touch, or activating a hands-free phone call with a single touch.
- States that have enacted a hands-free law have experienced an average decrease in the fatality rate of 15% within 2 years of enactment.¹¹
- Last year, distracted driving contributed to 584 work zone crashes in Missouri.
- In the past 5 years, at least 412 people have been killed and another 2,629 people were seriously injured in Missouri traffic crashes involving a distracted driver.

Automated Enforcement

- This proposal would authorize the use of automated speed enforcement on Missouri roadways. The equipment could be used, alongside traditional traffic enforcement, to identify drivers who are speeding excessively and issue citations accordingly.
- Approximately 30% of all traffic fatalities in Missouri involve a form of excessive speed, the most common factor in Missouri fatal crashes.¹² Over 1,800 fatalities in Missouri involved a speeding driver or one driving too fast for conditions in the last 5 years.
- Speeding remains one of the top contributors to work zone crashes, involved in 10% last year.
- Speed cameras have been shown to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes up to 44%.¹³

Endangerment of a Highway Worker

- This proposal would require a mandatory minimum fine of \$1000 for endangerment of a highway worker, \$5000 for aggravated endangerment of a highway worker if a worker is injured, and \$10,000 if a worker is killed. The proposal also ensures that striking a truck- or trailer-mounted attenuator (TMA) constitutes endangerment of a highway worker.
- In 2023, 36 people were killed, 134 people were seriously injured and 54 TMAs were struck in Missouri work zones.



SAFER FOR YOU

Ignition Interlock

- Current Missouri law requires the installation of an ignition interlock device for second or subsequent offenders. This proposal would strengthen that requirement to all convictions for intoxication-related offenses, including first offenses.
- Alcohol-impaired driving accounted for 14% of the 2023 traffic fatalities in Missouri.
- Laws requiring all impaired-driving offenders to install alcohol interlocks reduce the number of impaired drivers in fatal crashes by 16 percent. If all states without such laws adopted them, more than 500 additional lives could be saved each year.¹⁴

Open Container

- This proposal would prohibit open containers in the entire passenger area of motor vehicles, for both drivers and passengers.
- In the past 5 years, the state of Missouri has experienced an average of 150 traffic fatalities per year as the result of alcohol-impaired driving.

Primary Seat Belt

- This proposal would require the use of a seat belt for all occupants of a vehicle and allow law enforcement officers to stop a vehicle and issue a ticket for a violation with no other violation needing to occur first.
- On average, 3 people are killed on Missouri roadways every day. 2 out of 3 people killed in vehicles are unbuckled.
- If everyone in Missouri buckled up, an estimated 235 lives would be saved each year.¹⁵

Motorcycle Helmets

- This proposal would reinstate Missouri's all-rider helmet law requiring all motorcycle riders, regardless of age, to wear a helmet that meets or exceeds U.S. DOT standards.
- Missouri has experienced a 570% increase in unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities following the helmet repeal in August 2020. Two years before and after the repeal, the number has grown from 19 unhelmeted motorcyclist fatalities to 155.
- Motorcycle helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 69% and reduce the risk of death by 42%.¹⁶

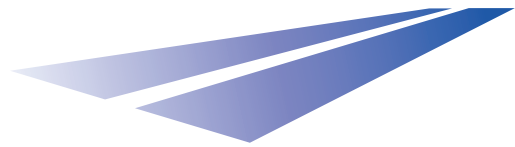
Electric Bicycles

- This proposal would ensure Class 2 electric bicycles are defined as motor vehicles and license requirements are updated to return to compliance with 23 U.S.C. § 164.
- An unintended consequence of SB 176 (2021) allows a rider whose license is suspended or revoked due to intoxication-related offenses to operate a (federally defined) motor vehicle on Missouri roads without an operator's license.

11 BUPD Distracted Driving Infographic.pdf (modot.org)
12 Speed and Aggressive Driving | Missouri Department of Transportation (savemolives.com)
13 Speed cameras for the prevention of road traffic injuries and deaths - PubMed (nih.gov)
14 Ignition Interlock Laws: Effects on Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes, 1982-2013 - PubMed (nih.gov)
15 Occupant Protection: Seat Belts, Car Seats, and Helmets | Missouri Department of Transportation (savemolives.com)
16 FINAL-2022-Roadmap-of-State-Highway-Safety-Laws.pdf (saferoads.org)



*Missouri Coalition
for Roadway Safety*



www.modot.org/BuckleUpPhoneDown

— SHOW - ME —
ZERO

Driving Missouri Toward Safer Roads



MoDOT.org

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