



November 28, 2017

The Honorable John Wisniewski  
New Jersey State Assembly  
State House Box 098  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0098

The Honorable Pamela Lampitt  
New Jersey State Assembly  
State House Box 098  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0098

The Honorable Nilsa Cruz-Perez  
New Jersey Senate  
State House Box 099  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0099

Dear Senator Cruz-Perez and Representatives Wisniewski and Lampitt:

We write in support of your legislation, S 2335 and A 3407, which will make all of us who share New Jersey roads safer by including practice requirements as part of New Jersey's graduated driver's license (GDL) program. New Jersey's driver licensing law is one of the strongest in the nation, but lacking in one important respect: required practice hours. This new legislation would mandate that a probationary driver's license cannot be issued unless the permit holder completes a minimum of 50 hours of practice driving, including 10 conducted during hours of darkness.

The bill is supported by the evidence. The law would have a positive impact on safety and the economy in New Jersey. According to the respected Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), the legislation will lead to a three percent reduction in teen crash fatalities and an estimated 13 percent reduction in collision claims.<sup>1</sup> In addition, an IIHS study concluded that GDL laws containing provisions increasing the required amount of supervised practice driving had a "significant beneficial effect on less severe crashes."<sup>2</sup> In addition, we encourage your colleagues to consider the following:

- Novice drivers are at a triple risk for a crash for every mile they drive in the first few months after licensure.<sup>3</sup>
- A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study of GDL laws indicated that one of the most important characteristics of effective GDL laws was mandating at least 50 hours of supervised driving.<sup>4</sup>
- A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) also found that GDL laws requiring at least 30 hours of supervised practice driving led to an 18 percent reduction in fatal crashes involving 16-year-old drivers.<sup>5</sup>

Safe Kids is a network of organizations across the country and globe dedicated to protecting kids from unintentional injury, which is the number one cause of death for children in the United States. Our state and local coalitions number more than 400 across the country, working on a broad range of injury risks from sports injuries to road safety. Our presence in New Jersey is strong, with 11 local coalitions in communities across the state lead by Safe Kids New Jersey at the Central Jersey Family Health Consortium.

Please do not hesitate to contact the coordinator of Safe Kids New Jersey, Carol Ann Giardelli, 732-524-3864, [cgiardel@its.nj.com](mailto:cgiardel@its.nj.com). We thank you for your leadership in sponsoring the legislation and look forward to working with you on it.

Sincerely,



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<sup>1</sup> IIHS GDL Crash Reduction Calculator. Available at: [http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/laws/gdl\\_calculator?state=NJ](http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/laws/gdl_calculator?state=NJ)

<sup>2</sup> Anne T. McCartt, Eric R. Teoh, Michele Fields, Keli A. Braitman & Laurie A. Hellinga. (2010). *Graduated Licensing Laws and Fatal Crashes of Teen Drivers: A National Study*. Traffic Injury Prevention. Vol. 11, Iss. 3. Available at: <http://www.iihs.org/frontend/iihs/documents/masterfiledocs.ashx?id=2038>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017, October 16). *Teen Drivers: Get The Facts*. Available at: [https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen\\_drivers/teendrivers\\_factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html)

<sup>4</sup> National Institutes of Health. (2011, November 4). *Graduated drivers licensing programs reduce fatal teen crashes*. Available at: <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/graduated-drivers-licensing-programs-reduce-fatal-teen-crashes>

<sup>5</sup> Baker, S., Chen, L., & Li, G. (2006). *National Evaluation of Graduated Driver Licensing Programs*. (DOT HS 810 614). Washington, DC. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.