



March 1, 2021

The Honorable Peter Buttigieg
Secretary of the Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Safe Kids Worldwide and 127 of its coalitions throughout the U.S join together to welcome you as U.S. Secretary of Transportation and are committed to working with you. Altogether, there are more than 400 Safe Kids coalitions. Your mission is fundamentally important as well as challenging, and we can leave no group of Americans behind. One of the disproportionately vulnerable groups on which we must focus are our children.

Every year, 3.85 million babies are born in the U.S. From the very first day they leave the hospital with their parents and are strapped into their first car seat, infants begin their lives as users of our transportation system. As they grow older, they face new and different safety risks. They transition to different car seats which must be installed correctly to be effective. Their next steps are on foot and on bike pedals on their way to schools and parks. This brings them into contact with new hazards, from rail crossings to streets designed for drivers rather than pedestrians, bicyclists and other users.

When they get behind the wheel of a car, they face a new hazard – their own tendency to speed and drive distracted. A recent report by the Governor’s Highway Safety Association found that teen drivers (16-19 years of age) account for a greater proportion of speed-related road fatalities (43 percent). Further, more than half of teen drivers killed in speeding-related crashes were not buckled up.

Unintentional injury is the number one cause of death involving children 19 and under, and fatalities in and around cars are the most significant driver of that tragic figure. It is made all the more tragic by the fact that they are preventable in most cases.

Underlying all of this is equity. It is a theme of the Biden Administration and rightly equity will be a common thread in setting priorities for all departments, including DoT and NHTSA. How can we achieve the Vision Zero challenge if we do not devote genuine dedication to protecting these 3.85 million children as they join us in cars, on foot, on bicycles and in all modes of transportation under your jurisdiction? The same can be said for all vulnerable Americans who share the roads, our senior citizens, the disabled and others. Fairness is particularly striking for the very young as they have no voice or decision-making power on their own safety.

President Biden’s plan to rebuild our infrastructure is also exciting and important. We hope that project planning in the program will consider the risks faced by children and other vulnerable users.

We look forward to working with you on the Vision Zero race towards 2050.

Sincerely,

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| Safe Kids Alabama | Safe Kids Fairfield County, CT |
| Safe Kids Alamance County, NC | Safe Kids Fairfield County, OH |
| Safe Kids Alexander County, NC | Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead, ND |
| Safe Kids Allegheny County, PA | Safe Kids Fayette County, KY |
| Safe Kids Anderson County, SC | Safe Kids Fulton County, GA |
| Safe Kids Anson County, NC | Safe Kids Gaston County, NC |
| Safe Kids Arkansas | Safe Kids Grand Forks, ND |
| Safe Kids Ashe/Alleghany Counties, NC | Safe Kids Granville County, NC |
| Safe Kids Benton-Franklin, WA | Safe Kids Greater Augusta, GA |
| Safe Kids Bismarck-Mandan, ND | Safe Kids Greater Cinninnati, OH |
| Safe Kids Bladen, NC | Safe Kids Greater Dallas, TX |
| Safe Kids Burke County, NC | Safe Kids Greater Dayton, OH |
| Safe Kids Cabarrus, NC | Safe Kids Greater Flint, MI |
| Safe Kids Caldwell County, NC | Safe Kids Greater Houston, TX |
| Safe Kids California | Safe Kids Greater Sacramento, CA |
| Safe Kids Cape Fear, NC | Safe Kids Greater Tampa, FL |
| Safe Kids Catawba County, NC | Safe Kids Guilford County, NC |
| Safe Kids Central California, CA | Safe Kids Halifax County, NC |
| Safe Kids Central Ohio, OH | Safe Kids Harnett County, NC |
| Safe Kids Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, NC | Safe Kids Hawaii |
| Safe Kids Chatham County, NC | Safe Kids Illinois |
| Safe Kids Chicago, IL | Safe Kids Indiana |
| Safe Kids Chowan, NC | Safe Kids Iowa |
| Safe Kids Cleveland County, NC | Safe Kids Jackson County, NC |
| Safe Kids Colorado | Safe Kids Johnson County, NC |
| Safe Kids Colorado Springs, CO | Safe Kids Kansas |
| Safe Kids Columbia Gorge, OR | Safe Kids Larimer County, CO |
| Safe Kids Connecticut | Safe Kids Lincoln County, NC |
| Safe Kids Cowley County, KS | Safe Kids Loess Hills, IA |
| Safe Kids Cumberland County, NC | Safe Kids Los Angeles West, CA |
| Safe Kids Cumberland Valley, TN | Safe Kids Louisville, KY |
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Safe Kids Worldwide

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