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,

Safe Kids Alaska
Safe Kids Alabama
Safe Kids Alamance County, NC
Safe Kids Alexander County, NC
Safe Kids Allegheny County, PA
Safe Kids Anderson County, SC
Safe Kids Anson County, NC
Safe Kids Arkansas
Safe Kids Ashe/Alleghany Counties, NC
Safe Kids Benton-Franklin, WA
Safe Kids Bismarck-Mandan, ND
Safe Kids Bladen, NC
Safe Kids Burke County, NC
Safe Kids Cabarrus, NC
Safe Kids Caldwell County, NC
Safe Kids California
Safe Kids Cape Fear, NC
Safe Kids Catawba County, NC
Safe Kids Central California, CA
Safe Kids Central Ohio, OH
Safe Kids Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, NC
Safe Kids Chatham County, NC
Safe Kids Chicago, IL
Safe Kids Chowan, NC
Safe Kids Cleveland County, NC
Safe Kids Colorado
Safe Kids Colorado Springs, CO
Safe Kids Columbia Gorge, OR
Safe Kids Connecticut
Safe Kids Cowley County, KS
Safe Kids Cumberland County, NC
Safe Kids Cumberland Valley, TN
Safe Kids Delaware
Safe Kids District of Columbia
Safe Kids Durham County, NC
Safe Kids Eastern Carolina, NC
Safe Kids Fairfield County, CT
Safe Kids Fairfield County, OH
Safe Kids Fargo-Moorhead, ND
Safe Kids Fayette County, KY
Safe Kids Fulton County, GA
Safe Kids Gaston County, NC
Safe Kids Grand Forks, ND
Safe Kids Granville County, NC
Safe Kids Greater Augusta, GA
Safe Kids Greater Cincinnati, OH
Safe Kids Greater Dallas, TX
Safe Kids Greater Dayton, OH
Safe Kids Greater Flint, MI
Safe Kids Greater Houston, TX
Safe Kids Greater Sacramento, CA
Safe Kids Greater Tampa, FL
Safe Kids Guilford County, NC
Safe Kids Halifax County, NC
Safe Kids Harnett County, NC
Safe Kids Hawaii
Safe Kids Illinois
Safe Kids Indiana
Safe Kids Iowa
Safe Kids Jackson County, NC
Safe Kids Johnson County, NC
Safe Kids Kansas
Safe Kids Larimer County, CO
Safe Kids Lincoln County, NC
Safe Kids Loess Hills, IA
Safe Kids Los Angeles West, CA
Safe Kids Louisville, KY
Safe Kids Macon County, NC
Safe Kids Mid-Michigan, MI
Safe Kids Mid-Carolinas Region, NC
Safe Kids Middlesex County, NJ
Safe Kids Mid-South, TN  
Safe Kids Minnesota  
Safe Kids Minot, ND  
Safe Kids Missoula, MT  
Safe Kids Montana  
Safe Kids Nassau County, NY  
Safe Kids New Jersey  
Safe Kids New York  
Safe Kids North Carolina  
Safe Kids Northeast Florida, FL  
Safe Kids Northern New Jersey  
Safe Kids Northwest Arkansas, AR  
Safe Kids Northwest Metro Minneapolis, MN  
Safe Kids Northwest Piedmont, NC  
Safe Kids Oakland County, MI  
Safe Kids Onslow, NC  
Safe Kids Orange County, CA  
Safe Kids Orange County, NC  
Safe Kids Otsego County, NY  
Safe Kids Palm Beach County, FL  
Safe Kids Pitt County, NC  
Safe Kids Queens, NY  
Safe Kids Randolph County, NC  
Safe Kids Rhode Island  
Safe Kids Riverbend, NC  
Safe Kids Robeson County, NC  
Safe Kids Rockingham, NC  
Safe Kids Rutherford County, NC  
Safe Kids San Antonio, TX  
Safe Kids San Diego, CA  

Safe Kids Santa Barbara County, CA  
Safe Kids Santa Clara/San Mateo, CA  
Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin, WI  
Safe Kids Springfield, MO  
Safe Kids St. Louis, MO  
Safe Kids Stanislaus County, CA  
Safe Kids Stanly County, NC  
Safe Kids Surry County, NC  
Safe Kids Tennessee  
Safe Kids Thurston County, WA  
Safe Kids Tooele County, UT  
Safe Kids Tulsa, OK  
Safe Kids Union County, NC  
Safe Kids Upstate, SC  
Safe Kids Utah  
Safe Kids Utah County, UT  
Safe Kids Vance County, NC  
Safe Kids Virginia  
Safe Kids Wake County, NC  
Safe Kids Washington State  
Safe Kids Wayne County, NC  
Safe Kids Western North Carolina, NC  
Safe Kids Wilkes County, NC  
Safe Kids Wilson County, NC  
Safe Kids Wisconsin  
Safe Kids Wood & Clark County, WI  
Safe Kids Worldwide

Contact: Anthony Green  
Chief Officer for Advocacy & Network  
agreen@safekids.org | 202.615.4300