

Changing Driver Behavior in Alabama



Celebrating Alabama's Progress
Certified Public Manager® Program
CPM Solutions Alabama 2025



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Team Members.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Current Factors That Influence the Need to Change Driver Behavior.....	6
Current Driving Climate – Nationwide.....	6
Current Driving Climate – Alabama.....	6
Project Statement and Tasks.....	7
Background.....	8
Overview of Traffic Fatality Stats in U.S. and Alabama.....	8
How Does Alabama Rank?.....	8
Common Causes of Traffic Fatalities in Alabama.....	9
Speeding.....	10
Driving Impaired.....	10
Absence of Seat Belt Usage.....	10
Alabama’s Current Efforts to Strengthen Driver Behavior.....	11
Stakeholders and Partnerships Who Work to Reduce Fatal Crashes.....	11
Strategies and Recommendations to Improve Driver Behavior in Alabama.....	12
Increasing Seat Belt Usage.....	13
Assessment of Alabama’s Efforts to Increase Seat Belt Usage.....	13
Other States’ Strategy for Improving Seat Belt Usage.....	16
Recommendations.....	18
Diversion programs.....	19
Assessment of Alabama’s Diversion Programs.....	19
Other States’ Diversion Program Strategies.....	24
Recommendations.....	25
Utilizing technologies.....	26
Assessment of Alabama’s Efforts to Utilize Technologies.....	26
Other States’ Strategy to Utilize Technology.....	27
Recommendations.....	29
Summary	30
Conclusion.....	31
References.....	33

TEAM MEMBERS

Alabama Department of Revenue

Cody Causey

Bethenia McCants

Warren Morgan

Holly Tompkins

Alabama Department of Finance Comptroller's Office

Amanda Leger

Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Otis Todd

Anna Wood

Alabama Department of Insurance

Tori Warren



The research, findings, and recommendations presented in this white paper do not represent the views of any agency or organization, but rather the collective educational research and analysis from a diverse group of participants in the Certified Public Manager® Training Program.

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Lieutenant Jeremy Baker (Traffic Homicide Coordinator)

Sam Adams (Director of Governmental Affairs)

The Center for Advanced Public Safety

Jesse Norris (Associate Director)

Alabama Department of Transportation

Allison Green (Marketing Manager, retired)

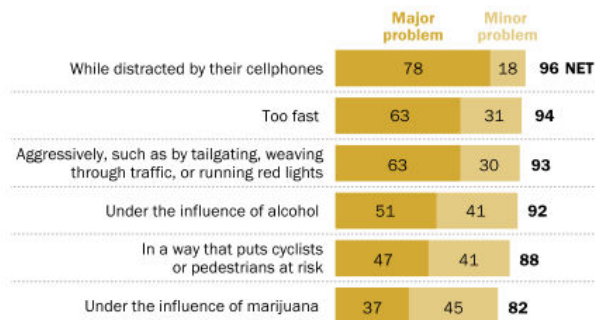
Amanda Deem (Drive Safe Alabama Coordinator)

Students Against Destructive Decisions

Laporsha Walker (Alabama State Coordinator)

Majorities of Americans see cellphone use, speeding and aggressive driving as major problems in their area

% of U.S. adults who say people driving ___ in their local community is a ...



Note: Those who gave no response are not shown. Those who said each issue was not a problem or who did not respond are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 12-18, 2024.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Introduction

Since the onset of the 2020 pandemic, a disturbing trend has emerged on American roadways: driving has become increasingly more dangerous. The encouraging declines in traffic fatalities observed between 2018 and 2020 have been reversed and there has been a 10.5% surge in fatalities from 2020 through 2022, the largest increase since the 1940s (Edmonds, Going in Reverse: Dangerous Driving Behaviors Rise, 2022). There's much

speculation about the root causes of this dangerous driving climate such as increased stress, changes in commuting patterns, or a decline in traffic enforcement but the truth is that there are a lot of contributing factors. In 2024, nearly half (49%) of U.S. adults surveyed by Pew Research Center believe that driving behavior in their local communities is less safe over the past five years (Jackson & Leppert, 2024). Only 9% perceive an improvement in driving behavior, while 35% feel there has been little to no change. A majority of 78% of respondents identified other drivers being distracted by their mobile devices as the biggest factor that causes dangerous driving, followed by driving aggressively and speeding, both at 63%. While the Pew Research Center survey shows the feelings of drivers towards factors that lead to unsafe driving, the 2023 Traffic Safety Culture Index (TSCI) survey shows the number of drivers who demonstrate these unsafe driving behaviors. The TSCI survey conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is meant to describe American's perception of, attitude towards, and engagement in dangerous driving behaviors (AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2024). The survey shows a concerning picture of road safety despite drivers acknowledging the dangers of risky driving behavior. Only 34.9% of drivers rarely engage in any risky driving behavior and are considered safe drivers. Distracted driving, aggressive driving, and impaired driving are perceived to be very or extremely dangerous at an 89% to 96% rate, still more than 65% of respondents admit they have engaged in these behaviors in the past 30 days. The TSCI survey also highlights a correlation between risky driving and increased driving frequency, suggesting that those who engage in these behaviors are also spending more time on the roads.

Current Factors That Influence the Need to Change Driver Behavior

Current Driving Climate - Nationwide

The Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety's "Roadmap to Safety Report" highlights an economic burden imposed by traffic crashes in the United States (Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety, 2024). This analysis estimates the annual economic cost of vehicle incidents to be over \$417 billion. This figure includes not only direct costs like vehicle damage, medical expenses, and legal fees, but also indirect costs, such as lost productivity, insurance rate increases, and the strain on emergency services. The Advocates have estimated that this economic impact would be about \$1,268 for each individual American, also characterized as the "Crash Tax." A report by the Network of Employers for Traffic Safety shows that the total cost of crashes to employers in 2018 was \$72.2 billion, of that, \$49.15 billion was the cost of vehicle crashes related to preventable factors like incorrect seat belt use, alcohol-use, distracted driving, and speeding (Network of Employers for Traffic Safety, 2021). This highlights the immense impact of risky driving behaviors and the potential for employers to significantly reduce their financial losses by promoting safer driving practices.

Current Driving Climate - Alabama

The Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety's 2025 Roadmap to Safety report has placed Alabama in the "Caution" category with 35 states sharing this rating (Advocates for Highway & Auto Safety, 2024). The "Caution" label reflects the Advocates' assessment of Alabama's current highway safety laws and practices, indicating that there are specific countermeasures and policy changes they believe are necessary to improve safety outcomes on the state's roads. The state received a "Caution" rating for occupant protection and overall state laws, while receiving a red "Danger" rating for child passenger safety, young drivers, and distracted driving. Alabama only received a green "Good" rating for the impaired driving and automated enforcement metrics.

ALABAMA

9,463 = Ten-year fatality total

974 = 2023 fatalities

\$6.437 Billion = Annual cost due to motor vehicle crashes

CAUTION

HIGHWAY LAWS ADOPTED

- Primary Enforcement Front Seat Belt Law
- All-Rider Motorcycle Helmet Law
- All-Offender Ignition Interlocks
- Open Container Law
- Permits Red Light Cameras by Law
- Red Light Cameras in Use
- Permits Automated Speed Enforcement by Law
- Automated Speed Enforcement in Use

HIGHWAY LAWS NEEDED

- Primary Enforcement Rear Seat Belt Law
- Rear Facing Through Age 2 or Older Law
- Booster Seat Law
- Rear Seat Through Age 12 Law
- Minimum Ages for Learner's Permit and Licensing
- 70 Hours of Supervised Driving Provision
- Nighttime Driving Restriction Provision
- Passenger Restriction Provision
- All-Driver Text Messaging Restriction
- GDL Cell Phone Restriction

Project Statement and Tasks

How do we change driver behavior to reduce traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities in the state of Alabama? In this white paper, the Changing Driver Behavior in Alabama team will raise awareness of the need for safer driving behaviors on Alabama highways while offering recommendations to change driver behavior. Specifically, the team will research and assess strategies to increase seat belt usage, strengthen the impact of diversion programs, and implement technology in making recommendations for changing driver behavior to reduce traffic fatalities. This will be accomplished by:

1. Determining what factors influence the need to change driver behavior, reducing vehicle fatalities in Alabama.
2. Researching Alabama's current efforts to strengthen driver behavior, resulting in reduced traffic fatalities.
 - a. Increasing seat belt usage.
 - b. Offering diversion programs for driving violations.
 - c. Utilizing highway and automobile technology.
3. Researching the efforts of other states to change driver behavior, resulting in reduced traffic fatalities.
4. Offering recommendations that key stakeholders can implement to improve driver behavior and reduce traffic crashes and fatalities.

Background

The U.S. Department of Transportation maintains a comprehensive database known as the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), a crucial resource for understanding highway safety trends. Since its inception in 1975, FARS has collected and compiled data on all fatal injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This system provides a detailed yearly record of circumstances surrounding these tragic events and enables researchers and policymakers to analyze patterns and develop strategies to improve safety on the road.

Overview of Traffic Fatality Stats in U.S. and Alabama

How Does Alabama Rank?

Analysis of the 2022 FARS data summarized in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Traffic Safety Facts 2022 document reveals a concerning picture of traffic fatalities in Alabama. While the state boasts a high rate of seat belt usage (93%, ranking 7th nationally), its overall traffic safety performance lags behind the national average in many statistical categories (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). Alabama ranks 30th in deaths per vehicle miles traveled (VMT) at 1.38 fatality per 100 million miles compared to the U.S. average of 1.33 fatality. What's particularly striking is the disparity in restrained and unrestrained occupant deaths; Alabama ranks 37th in restrained occupant deaths and a dismal 44th in unrestrained occupant deaths (per VMT) suggesting a significant issue with safety restraint effectiveness despite high usage. Alabama's consistently low ranking across numerous statistical categories paints a concerning picture of the state's overall performance. Alabama being such a lowly ranked state is very concerning when you consider the perception of the current driving behaviors nationally, referenced previously by the Pew Research and AAA survey. According to the Center for Advanced Public Safety (CAPS) vehicle miles traveled serves as the standard metric for quantifying traffic data and gauging risk on roadways. In Alabama, the most recent figures indicate that there are also struggles with alcohol and speeding related fatalities, ranking 27th and 21st in the nation respectively (per VMT). These statistics indicate that while seat belt use is prevalent, the state faces challenges in reducing fatalities related to alcohol, speeding, and other factors impacting occupant safety.

To gain deeper insight into Alabama's traffic safety performance, states with comparable fatality rates per VMT, deemed "peer states," were identified and their FARS data was compared to Alabama's to identify deviations or outliers that could shed light on potential areas for improvement. Vehicle fatalities that involved alcohol per VMT, seat belt use rate, and fatalities that involved speeding per VMT are categories that were compared across these peer states.

Alabama is the only 1 of these 6 states to outperform the U.S. Average in all three categories.

	Alcohol Impaired Vehicle Fatalities Per VMT	Seat Belt Use Rate	Speeding Fatalities Per VMT
Alabama	27 th	7 th	21 st
California	42 nd	4 th	36 th
Georgia	28 th	30 th	19 th
Missouri	21 st	30 th	41 st
North Carolina	24 th	21 st	45 th
South Dakota	38 th	32 nd	38 th
U.S. Average	33 rd	18 th	31 st
*Outperforming AL			

Common Causes of Traffic Fatalities in Alabama

Vehicle fatalities have increased more than 18% over the last 10 years with an average of 934 fatalities per year (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). It's worth noting that most fatal crashes involve more than one dangerous driving behavior so it's difficult to identify an exact causation. Fatal crash stats in Alabama show that there is disparity for fatal crashes between rural roadways and urban roadways. While only 31% of total accidents occur in rural areas, the incidents account for 60% of all traffic fatalities. Factors such as higher speeds, limited access to emergency medical services, inadequate infrastructure, and a higher prevalence of impaired driving are likely to contribute to this increased severity. Another opportunity for improvement because of a statistical outlier is 15–20-year-old drivers. They were involved in fatal and serious injury crashes at a percentage rate that was twice the rate of their percentage of licensed drivers (Alabama Department of Transportation, 2022). Distracted driving is becoming a more significant public safety concern because of the increase in popularity of mobile electronic devices. Across the United States, in 2022 alone, 3,308 lives were lost in crashes involving distracted drivers and

289,310 people were injured (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2024). Tragically, 621 of these victims, were vulnerable road users like pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-occupants.

Speeding

Speeding has emerged as a significant threat on Alabama roadways, ranking as the second leading risk factor in vehicle fatalities at 27.5% of all fatal crashes over the latest 10-year period (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). This alarming statistic raises concerns about the preventative measures needed to address this issue and the consequences of exceeding speed limits and driving at unsafe speeds. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data from 2022 shows that 87% of speeding-related traffic fatalities occurred on non-interstate roadways (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). This suggests that factors beyond just high-speed travel may contribute significantly to the risk of speeding-related accidents.

Driving Impaired

Impairment stands out as the single largest contributing factor in fatal car crashes over the last 10 years, accounting for 28.4% of all incidents (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). Cannabis, prescription medications, and other substances contribute to the growing presence of drug-involved impairment accidents on U.S. roadways. The impact of specific drugs on driving abilities can vary significantly based on how they affect brain function and how quickly the body can process them. A substantial portion of traffic fatalities now stem from this issue, more than 25% of the 38,824 national crash fatalities were directly linked to drug-impaired driving (Chen, Tsai, Fortin, & Cooper, 2022). The risk and consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or even certain medications can compromise alertness and reaction time and have devastating outcomes.

Absence of Seat Belt Usage

While Alabama has a published seat belt restraint use rate of over 93%, a staggering 60% of fatalities involved vehicle occupants that did not take the simple precaution of using a proper seat belt restraint (National Center for Statistics and Analysis, 2025). Increasing the seat belt usage rate by every 1% could potentially save 76 lives in Alabama per year.

Alabama's Current Efforts to Strengthen Driver Behavior

The "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" program is a nationwide drunk driving prevention campaign launched in 2014. The program is strategically timed around the Labor Day holiday and represents a concerted effort to combat impaired driving. This high-visibility enforcement campaign aims to drastically reduce the number of drivers operating vehicles under the influence of alcohol or drugs. By increasing law enforcement presence and public awareness, the program seeks to deter individuals from getting behind the wheel while impaired, ultimately contributing to safer roads and fewer accidents. Since its inception, the percentage of total fatalities that are from alcohol-impaired drivers has decreased 3%. According to the University of Alabama's Center for Advanced Public Safety website, the campaign survey results show that 77% of the 500 Alabama driver residents contacted, had seen or heard messages encouraging people to avoid drinking and driving (CAPS Assisted with the Data Collection, n.d.).

Stakeholders and Partnerships Who Work to Reduce Fatal Crashes

A driver is 23 times more likely to wreck if they are texting and fatalities associated with distracted driving have increased almost 54% from 2018 to 2023 (Alabama Department of Transportation, 2024). Distracted driving data is widely believed to have underreporting discrepancies because of unreliable crash data. A report from the National Safety Council (NSC) highlights the challenges of collecting and reporting reliable crash data (National Safety Council Nationwide – Cell Phone Use Underreported, n.d.). Police may rely on drivers to admit guilt because there is no evidence available that proves they were distracted, or the use of an electronic device just wasn't recorded in the crash report at all. Alabama passed the new hands-free driving legislation in June 2023. This law, referred to as the "Hands-Free-Law", puts restrictions on the use of telecommunications devices while operating a motor vehicle. Alabama drivers are in violation of the law if they are holding a wireless telecommunications device while driving and observed to be swerving, crossing lanes without signaling properly, or operating in any other impaired manner. For the first year of the hands-free-law, law enforcement officers could only issue a written warning but effective June 15, 2024, a citation can be issued, resulting in a fine and points added to the driver license record. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) has launched a Hands-free law campaign called "Code of the Road" to help spread awareness of the recent changes with mobile devices.

This campaign was executed by using a partnership approach with the targeted drivers instead of



a fear-based approach. The campaign focuses on 16–34-year-old Alabama drivers in an effort to change driving behavior starting with the next generation of drivers. The campaign delivery includes broadcasting ads on 15 TV stations, streaming ads on smart TVs and websites, and ads on social media platforms. The Code of the Road digital campaign yielded over 2.5 million impressions over a 3-month period in 2024 and almost 5 million impressions monthly for outdoor advertising efforts. ALDOT’s Drive Safe Alabama hands-free campaign won two awards at the TransComm national conference held by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

The University of Alabama’s Center for Advanced Public Safety (CAPS) supports driver behavior initiatives through partnerships with various federal, state, and municipal agencies. They have partnered with entities like the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, Alabama Department of Revenue, Mississippi Department of Public Safety, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. These partnerships have allowed CAPS to address various traffic safety concerns. CAPS has a strong track record of working to improve public safety, particularly traffic safety. They utilize software, like CAPS Critical Analysis Reporting Environment, to analyze data, track trends, and develop effective countermeasures. This has enabled them to address specific needs related to driver behavior. CAPS also works with other colleges and research centers to leverage diverse expertise and resources (Research, n.d.).

Strategies and Recommendations to Improve Driver Behavior in Alabama

As the team researched, we focused on three areas: seat belt usage, diversion programs, and the use of technology. We assessed Alabama’s and other states’ efforts to improve seat belt usage, diversion programs, and utilization of technology. Based on our research, we have derived strategies and recommendations to improve driver behavior in Alabama.

Increasing Seat Belt Usage

Assessment of Alabama's Efforts to Increase Seat Belt Usage

Alabama participates in the Click It Or Ticket (CIOT) campaign yearly. CIOT is a national high-visibility enforcement campaign that focuses on the consequences that drivers may face for not wearing their seat belt while also urging people to always buckle up. The campaign highlights law enforcement's goal of encouraging drivers and passengers to wear seat belts and to spread



awareness about the increased police presence on the roads during this period. The CIOT program is conducted each year from April through June. The 2023 campaign included multiple agencies and organizations under the leadership of the Office of Highway Safety in the Law Enforcement/Traffic Safety (LETS) Division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA). The evaluations showed that seat belt restraint use increased from 92.7% in 2022 to 93.38% in 2023. Some other important facts and findings from the program were that women wore their seat belts at a greater percentage of the time than men (95.9% vs. 84.5%), the child restraint usage rate was observed to be 93.6%, 91.2% of phone respondents are aware of the Alabama seat belt law, 97.5% of phone respondents stated that they wanted to wear their seat belts if they were ever involved in a crash. An enforcement exercise was conducted over a two-week period. Members from 83 law enforcement agencies participated from the municipal to the state level. Law enforcement worked a total of 4,390 hours and 11,186 total citations, arrests, and warnings were issued by officers. The 2023 CIOT program was extremely effective and has been conducted in Alabama since 2001. Seat belt use was evaluated in two primary ways: (1) by direct observation of vehicles, based upon a carefully designed, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)-approved, sampling technique, and (2) through a telephone survey. 2023 was the tenth year to implement the revamped NHTSA-approved observational survey plan. During the telephone survey, interviewees were asked how often they used their seat belts. 87.4% answered "all the time" and 96% of the phone survey participants reported their seat belt use as either "all of the time" or "most of the time". The survey indicated that 92% of phone respondents think it is important for police to enforce the seat belts laws.

ALDOT brings awareness through its highway safety campaign called Drive Safe Alabama. By providing safe driving information through online resources and educational opportunities, ALDOT aims to reduce crash-related injuries and fatalities on Alabama's roadways. Educating the public on how to stay safe on the road is an important step toward strengthening Alabama's highway safety culture. Safe roads start with safe drivers. Drive Safe Alabama places special emphasis on the four main causes of crash-related injuries and fatalities in Alabama: failure to wear seat belts, speeding, distracted driving and impaired driving. Crash data collected each year by law enforcement shows that these continue to be areas of concern. The 2023 Alabama Crash Facts confirms this by showing that 60% of occupants involved in a crash were fatally injured if they were not wearing a seat belt and 66.7% of the children who died were not properly restrained.



Alabama implemented the Buckle Up in Your Truck (BUIYT) program alongside the Click It or Ticket (CIOT) program in hopes of increasing seat belt usage for pickup truck occupants. CAPS identified pickup truck drivers as automobile restraint holdouts in their Buckle Up in Your Truck evaluation of 2007 (CARE 2007). This program evaluation also recognizes that there was a 1.2% positive increase to 77.1% in seat belt usage for truck occupants in the first 3 years of the BUIYT program. The seat belt usage rate for pickup truck occupants in Alabama is around 82.1% in 2023 according to the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report (Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, 2024). The CIOT program was implemented in 2001, and seat belt usage has improved from 71% in 2000 to 92.7% in 2022.

Drive Safe Alabama uses a variety of outreach methods to inform the public. Billboards, social media, TV, radio and online advertising, news stories, partnerships and teen safe driving events are

all part of the campaign. Currently, the Code of Alabama states that the seat belt law is the following (Seat Belt Laws, n.d.):

Section 32-5B-4 Safety Belt Requirements for Occupants of Passenger Cars; Exemptions.

- (a)(1) Each occupant of a passenger car manufactured with safety belts in compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 shall have a safety belt properly fastened about his or her body at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- (2) An adult occupant of a passenger car in violation of subdivision (1) shall be the proper person to be charged with the violation.
- (3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a violation of this section in any seat other than a front seat of a vehicle shall be a secondary violation after a lawful stop of the vehicle based on probable cause of another violation of law and the issuance of a citation or warrant of arrest for the violation.
- (b) The provisions of subsection (a) shall not apply to:
- (1) A child passenger under the purview of Section 32-5-222, who is required to use a child passenger restraint system or a seat belt pursuant to Section 32-5-222.
- (2) An occupant of a passenger car who possesses a written statement from a licensed physician that he or she is unable for medical reasons to wear a safety belt.
- (3) A rural letter carrier of the United States Postal Service while performing his or her duties as a rural letter carrier.

As stated in (a) (3) above: “a violation of this section in any seat other than a front seat of a vehicle shall be a secondary violation...”. Secondary seat belt laws allow law enforcement officers to issue tickets only if the driver is pulled over for committing another driving offense. Alternately, primary seat belt laws give law enforcement officers the right to stop and ticket individuals who are not buckled up. In rural and urban communities, this has resulted in higher rates of seat belt usage and fewer deaths from crashes. Currently, the fine for not wearing a seat belt in Alabama is \$25 for adults and children, plus court costs.

In addition, child restraint laws require children to use car seats, booster seats, or seat belts according to their appropriate weight, height, and age. In October 2024, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) started a Child Passenger Safety Voucher Program to provide car seats and booster seats to caregivers who receive a ticket or warning for not having car seats for their

children or improperly using child restraints. The program additionally requires the driver to participate in a self-paced Car Seat Basics course. This program is only available for tickets or warnings received in Calhoun, Montgomery, and St. Clair counties.

ADPH Injury Prevention Branch in Montgomery, Alabama conducts car seat clinics by appointment only. Certified child passenger safety technicians install car seats, and the technicians can also check to make sure the car seats that parents have installed are installed correctly. For the Montgomery clinic, parents or guardians must bring a picture ID to their scheduled appointment. Those seeking car seat assistance must provide proof of eligibility, and the child for whom the seat is intended must be present. A licensed driver must also be present for the appointment. The car seat program currently exists in three other cities: Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, and Huntsville.

Other States' Strategy for Improving Seat Belt Usage

For comparison, we looked at other states and the awareness programs they use to increase seat belt and car seat usage.

Kentucky has implemented the High Five Rural Traffic Safety Project (HFRTSP) to encourage increased seat belt usage. The HFRTSP is a data-driven, multi-agency effort to increase seat belt usage and reduce serious injury and fatal crashes on rural roads in Kentucky through the use of education, engineering and enforcement. In 2021, the project revealed that 65% of fatalities in Kentucky occurred on rural roads. Most crashes occurring on rural roads involve only one vehicle (High Five, 2025). The High Five Project includes local and state law enforcement, engineers and traffic safety professionals working together to identify road hazards and make upgrades wherever possible. In its first year, traffic fatalities decreased from 806 to 744. In 2023 data shows that 89.4% of the population wore a seat belt in Kentucky (Franklin, 2024). The HFRTSP uses Community outreach (cards and posters in public spaces), provides education at high schools, conducts seat belt surveys, and assesses roadways to find solutions and foster changes in seat belt usage (High Five, 2025).

Tennessee has several programs, including "Reduce TN Crashes", "Border to Border" and the "Click It and Ticket" campaign, to promote seat belt usage and enhance occupant protection, with the Tennessee Highway Safety Office (THSO) playing a key role. The Reduce TN Crashes program is a THSO grant-funded initiative aimed at increasing occupant protection education and

improving the state's seat belt usage rate (What is Reduce TN Crashes, n.d.) . Border to Border (B2B) is a 1-day national seat belt awareness kickoff event, coordinated by participating state highway safety offices and law enforcement liaisons. B2B strives to increase law enforcement participation and provide seat belt fact sheets at heavily traveled border checkpoints (Law Enforcement Campaigns: Border to Border, n.d.). Tennessee has several programs aimed at educating youth in seat belt usage. Ollie Otter, a program developed by the Tennessee Road Builders Association and Tennessee Tech University, focuses on educating children in pre-K through 4th grade about seat belt and booster seat safety through interactive programs in elementary schools (Ollie Otter, Nice to Meet You, n.d.). The Ollie Otter program is sponsored through the Tennessee Highway Safety Office. The Click It and Ticket Youth Project is a project, directed by teens, which rewards students who arrive at school wearing their seatbelts with a "Citation of Good Behavior" and those not wearing them with a "Warning: Poor Choice" citation, with the goal of promoting highway safety and leadership development (Click It and Ticket Youth Project, n.d.). Seatbelt Convincer is a crash simulator that allows riders to safely experience the force generated during a 5-10 MPH crash, demonstrating the effectiveness of seatbelts (Activities: Seat Belt Convincer, n.d.). Battle of the Belt was a statewide competition for Tennessee high schools, but the program was changed in 2023 so schools can conduct independent educational programming without competing with other schools (Battle of the Belt, n.d.).

Virginia has several programs aimed at increasing child seat usage and the correct way to install the seats. The programs, run by local health districts and the Virginia Department of Health, offer free safety seat check stations throughout the state (Safety Seat Checks, n.d.). The safety seat check takes around 20-30 minutes. Participants provide information about their safety seat and child by completing a form. The safety seat is checked to ensure it fits the child and is not expired or recalled, and education is provided on how to properly install and use the safety seat harness. Remote safety seat checks are also available by video call in some locations in Virginia. These locations include counties that do not have a Safety Seat Check Station or are a long distance to a location with a Safety Seat Check Station (Safety Seat Checks, n.d.).

Texas also participates in the CIOT campaign annually. The Texas Department of Transportation recently started a new program called "Drive Like a Texan" (Drive Like a Texan, n.d.). The Texas Department of Transportation's website states the following regarding the Drive Like a Texan initiative: "By reminding everyone in Texas to show the same respect to others when they're

behind the wheel that's routine when Texans meet face to face, we can change the behavior of drivers and make Texas roads safer for all" (Drive Like a Texan, n.d.). In addition, Texas has higher fines for seat belt violations. Texas' first offense fine is \$200, the highest in the US (U.S. State Seat-Belt Laws & Penalties: 2025 Snapshot, 2025).

Recommendations

Through our research, we have found that Alabama has made significant efforts in increasing seat belt usage. Through Alabama's CIOT program, the Drive Safe Alabama campaign, and BUIYT programs, Alabama has made huge strides. However, the data shows that of those involved in a fatal crash, 60% died while not wearing a seat belt and 66.7% of children killed in a crash were not wearing a seat belt or were improperly restrained (Alabama Department of Transportation, 2024). Therefore, there is still room for significant improvement.

The current fine in Alabama for not wearing a seatbelt is \$25. Nichols, et al. (Nichols, Tippetts, Fell, Eichelberger, & Haseltine, 2014) examined the relationship between seat belt violation fines and seat belt use and found that increasing fines was associated with increased seat belt use. Increasing a state's fine from \$25 to \$60 was associated with increases of 3% to 4% in both observed seat belt use and belt use among front-seat occupants killed in crashes, an effect that was additive with increases attributed to the type of seat belt law. Increasing the fine from \$25 to \$100 was associated with increases of 6% to 7% for these measures; however, there were diminishing returns for fines above this amount (Nichols, Tippetts, Fell, Eichelberger, & Haseltine, 2014). To increase seat belt awareness and usage, we recommend the State of Alabama increase fines for seat belt violations. This would increase the severity of the driver's punishment, thus decreasing the chances of that person having a repeat offense.

We recommend expanding the Alabama Department of Public Health's (ADPH) program in which they provide car seats and booster seats to caregivers who receive citations or warnings for not having car seats for their children or improperly using child restraints to more counties. Currently, the program is only in 3 counties. Expanding the program to cover more counties would allow Alabama to be able to assist more families, thus creating a larger impact on increasing car seat usage. We recommend expanding ADPH's car seat clinics to more cities. The clinics are currently in four cities. By expanding the program to cover more cities, Alabama would be able to help more families by installing car seats and making sure they are installed correctly. Additionally, we

recommend additional Car Seat Inspection Stations across the state. Currently there are only eighteen stations to serve the State.

Lastly, we recommend launching a youth focused seat belt education program that concentrates on teaching booster seat and seatbelt usage at an early age like Tennessee's Ollie Otter program. By implementing a youth focused seat belt education program, Alabama would be able to teach the youth about good road safety habits so that good habits can be formed at an earlier age.

Diversion Programs

Assessment of Alabama's Diversion Programs

Other ways in which Alabama strives to strengthen driver behavior are by offering diversion programs, graduated driver licenses, driving schools, and educational programs. Diversion programs aid individuals who have committed low level crimes with assistance and keep them from further conviction and imprisonment (Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice, 2020). The number of diversion programs across Alabama have gone up greatly and are used for various crimes (Flowers, 2021). Alabama defines a pretrial diversion program as "a voluntary option that allows an offender, upon advice of counsel or where counsel is waived in a judicial process, to knowingly agree to the imposition by the district attorney of certain conditions of behavior and conduct for a specified period of time upon the offender which would allow the offender to have his or her charges reduced, dismissed without prejudice, or otherwise mitigated, should all conditions be satisfied during the time frame set by the district attorney as provided in the agreement" (Alabama Code Section 12-17-226(7)). Basically, this allows the district attorney to create their own diversion programs. After AL Code Section 12-17-226(7) was put in place, many municipalities started their own diversion programs which has resulted in little consistency or standardization among the diversion programs (Flowers, 2021).

The majority of ticketed driving offenses can be handled outside of court. Alabama has a Traffic Resolution website, which allows you to look up your ticket(s) and check whether it can be resolved without going to traffic court. Many of the counties offering driver education as diversion programs allow the driver to request or apply for driving school through this system. The website allows you to view information on how each county handles driving violations (Alabama Traffic Service Center, n.d.). Some counties do not allow diversion driving schools, some have differences

in eligibility requirements, and some require community service hours to be done while attending driving schools, etc. In Crenshaw and Elmore counties, it is at the judge's discretion whether or not the violator is allowed to go to driving school. Crenshaw County requires community service hours while attending driving school. In Monroe and Dallas counties, the offense must qualify for driving school, it must be the violator's first offense of a moving violation, must not have had a DUI arrest, and the district judge has to approve the violator to attend driving school. If it is approved, the violator's case may be dismissed. He or she will only have to pay court costs after driving school is completed (Alabama Traffic Service Center, n.d.). Therefore, how the counties in Alabama handle driving violations may differ county-by-county.

Alabama strives to improve driver behavior by offering defensive driving school (DDS). Drivers who receive minor traffic citations may be eligible for a DDS diversion program, which can result in the dismissal of their traffic ticket, prevent points from being added to their driving record, and prevent increases on auto insurance premiums. Traffic school and defensive driving programs are available in many states but not all and within each state rules can vary from court to court. Alternatively, to ticket dismissal, some states will allow a reduction of the required fine or of points from a driver's license without completely dismissing the ticket.

Within Alabama, each county court operates under its own policies, so attending a DDS program in one county does not automatically apply to another. Eligibility for these programs typically requires that the driver has no prior moving violations within the past one to three years, no DUI arrests, and does not hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Some programs may limit attendance to first time offenders, require use of an in-person course or have other specificities. For example, in Jefferson County, drivers must contact the District Attorney's Traffic Unit within 14 days of receiving their citation to determine eligibility. In Madison County, drivers are required to get in touch with the Office of Alternative Sentencing and Release (OASR) at least five days before their court date. In Lee County, the Pretrial Diversion Program may be an option, but it involves a formal application process.

Defensive Driving Schools are beneficial to drivers in increasing behind-the-wheel driving performance and self-perceived driving abilities (Akbari, et al., 2021). Use of the schools as diversion programs provides the additional benefits of ticket dismissal and reduced insurance premiums. However, studies have shown mixed results on whether post-license driver education

are effective in preventing traffic crashes and injuries (Villaveces, et al., 2011) (Ker, et al., 2005). While driver education diversion programs can lead to improved driving behavior and a reduction in traffic violations, their impact on actual crash rates is less certain. The success of these programs is influenced by factors such as participant engagement and program quality.



In addition, Alabama offers driver education classes throughout the state to help improve driver's behavior in beginner drivers. The Alabama Department of Education has a manual titled "Driver and Traffic Safety Education Curriculum Manual" on their website. It states that it is the Alabama Department of Education's responsibility to oversee the driver

education programs in the school systems throughout the state (Alabama Department of Education, 2021). Alternately, driver education programs in private schools across the state of Alabama are directed by the Alabama Department of Public Safety. Alabama doesn't require drivers to take driver education like some other states do. Driver education programs have proven to be beneficial (Akbari, et al., 2021). It helps drivers to gain confidence, it provides drivers with the necessary skills that will improve safety on the roads, and it often results in discounts on drivers' auto insurance (Top Benefits of Drivers Ed: How It Enhances Road Safety, 2025).

Some research indicates that these programs can lead to significant reductions in traffic violations. For instance, a study by the National Safety Council (NSC) found that online driver safety training resulted in a 74% decrease in traffic violation rates among participants over a year (Agarwal, 2025). However, the impact on actual crash rates is less clear. A review of 14 controlled studies on Defensive Driving Courses revealed that while these programs consistently reduced traffic violations by about 10%, they did not show a consistent effect on reducing motor vehicle crashes. This suggests that while participants may become more law-abiding drivers, these behavioral changes might not be sufficient to significantly lower crash rates (Lund & Williams, 1985).

The effectiveness of these programs also depends on the approach taken. Programs focused on recidivism prevention, which aim to foster lawful driving behavior, have been found to be more effective in reducing both violations and accidents among repeat offenders compared to accident prevention programs that primarily teach safe driving practices (McKnight & Tippetts, 1997).

Traffic offenders are a high-risk group for subsequent violations and crashes and interventions are needed to prevent recidivism, crashes, and motor vehicle related injuries (Kaur, et al., 2023). While there are several benefits to diversion programs, there is concern that ticket dismissal removes the negative consequence, reducing the personal cost of driving infractions (Craft & Tydings, 2025).

Another way in which Alabama is effectively working to improve driver behavior is by implementing a graduated driver license program. According to ALEA's website, below are the requirements and enforcement details of a graduated driver license (Graduated Driver License, n.d.):

Stage I (Learner's Permit)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be age 15 or older.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must complete the written examination and receive a passing grade. (Exam is based on information in the Alabama Driver Manual, which is available for download on our website)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Stage I license (learner's permit) authorizes teens to drive when accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or licensed driver who is age 21 or older and occupying the front seat beside the licensee. Teens may also drive when accompanied by a licensed or certified driving instructor occupying the front seat beside the licensee.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam Fee is \$5.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage I license fee is \$36.25

Stage II (Restricted License)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be age 16 or older.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have permission from parent, grandparent or legal guardian to receive a Stage II license (restricted) and drive without supervision.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must complete road skills examination with a passing grade. (Exam is based on information in the Alabama Driver Manual.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not drive during the hours of midnight to 6 a.m. unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, accompanied by a licensed driver who is age 21 or older with parent or legal guardian's consent, going to

or from an event sponsored by school or religious organization, going to or from place of employment or driving for the purpose of a medical, fire or law- enforcement related emergency.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not have more than one passenger in the vehicle other than parents, legal guardians or family members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must not use any handheld communication devices while driving.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage II license fee is \$36.25.

Stage III (Unrestricted or Regular License)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be age 17 or older. Those who are age 17 must have a Stage II license for at least six months before applying for Stage III license. Individuals who are age 18 and older may apply immediately for a Stage III license (passing score on road skills exam is required).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage III license fee is \$31.25 for those who present a Stage II license and receive a restriction free duplicate. The fee is \$36.25 for those who did not obtain a Stage II license prior to turning age 18.

Enforcement:
<p>Violations of any of the graduated driver license law restrictions will result in the restrictive period being extended by six months or until the licensee reaches age 18. Violations of the above conditions are considered traffic violations, but the licensees will not be subject to any criminal penalties or court costs. No citation will be issued unless the licensee is stopped for a separate violation of the law and issued a citation or warrant for the separate violation. No points will be assessed for violation of the above restrictions. If a licensee is convicted of a second moving traffic violation or is convicted of failure to give information, render aid, racing, fleeing or attempting to elude a law enforcement officer, reckless driving, illegal passing, driving on the wrong side of the road or any other offense where four or more points are assessed, his or her license will automatically be suspended for 60 days. This rule will also apply to other violations as designated by rules and regulations that may be imposed pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. (ALEA, 2010).</p>

Graduated driver licenses help young drivers by providing a more gradual approach broken down into stages instead of the driver being given all driving privileges at once (What Is a Graduated Driver's License and Why It Matters for Teen Safety, n.d.).



Based on a study done by AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, “results indicate that implementation of three-stage GDL programs was associated with an overall national reduction in the population-based fatal and injury crash involvement rates of 16-year-old drivers. The most comprehensive programs were associated with 38% lower rates of fatal crashes and 40% lower rates of injury crashes” (Baker, Chen, & Guohua, 2007). ALEA administers the Alabama GDL program and collaborates with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to promote awareness of the program and streamline the driver license process for public school driver education students. Information regarding the GDL program has also been added to many of the driver education programs outside of the ALSDE. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has also worked to raise awareness by providing a toolkit for educating teens on driver issues and safety.

Other States' Diversion Program Strategies

Other states have various strategies for improving driver behavior. For instance, Mississippi passed Senate Bill 2695 which was signed into law on 5/10/2024 that mandates new drivers finish a driver education program prior to the individuals receiving a driver's license. The bill requires that Mississippi's Department of Public Safety create the program by 7/1/2026 not only for kids in schools but for adults who are not in school or cannot access the classes that are in the schools. Massachusetts also requires driver education programs. They offer courses through their public schools and driving schools. They all have to meet the same standards but are separately licensed (Mandatory Driver Education, Senate Bill 2695, 2024).

Traffic school and defensive driving programs are available in many states but vary in their use. The State of Washington allows drivers facing license suspension for 3 moving violations in a 12-month period, or 4 violations in a 24-month period, to alternatively complete safe-driving course. In South Carolina, violators within participating counties may apply to the Traffic Education

Program which integrates behavioral accountability components, such as a community service and post-program monitoring to discourage repeat offenders. TEP participants are required to complete 4 hours of community service as well as 4 hours of driver education and must remain violation free for 6 months following program involvement.

California's Traffic Violator School (TVS) program allows eligible drivers to attend a state-approved traffic school to mask a traffic violation from their public driving record, thereby preventing points from being assessed and avoiding potential increases in insurance premiums. The TVS program is administered by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The program underwent substantial changes in 2010, including regulation of the driver schools by the DMV and reducing the violations that could be dismissed. Case studies have shown a decline in crash rates in TVS participants since the program standardization. Similarly to Alabama, drivers must first receive court approval to participate, and the program is available to drivers cited for eligible infractions, such as speeding or running a stop sign. For the TVS program, drivers cannot have attended traffic school for a previous violation within the past 18 months. Once completed, the violation is masked from the driver's record seen by insurers, though it remains visible to the DMV and courts.

Recommendations

Through our research, we found several ways in which Alabama has put significant effort into improving driver behavior. We derived several recommendations in which we think could further improve driver behavior. For instance, several things could be done to improve the use of defensive driving school (DDS) diversion programs in Alabama. We recommend creating a standardized statewide driver's diversion program. By integrating a structured and statewide program similar to California's TVS program, Alabama could standardize traffic diversion programs across counties, improve accessibility through online course options, and lessen the administrative burden on local courts. Setting a 24-month lookback period and other standards statewide would avoid confusion and inconsistency, limit overuse, and bring Alabama in line with proven policy standards used in other states. Additionally, a uniform system could ensure fairness in how traffic violations are handled and provide consistent data for evaluating program outcomes.

We recommend expanding dismissal options to include structured corrective actions like community service and probationary monitoring, which have been shown to enhance the effectiveness, fairness, and flexibility of Alabama's driver diversion programs. Programs that combine education with behavioral accountability, like South Carolina's Traffic Education Program (TEP), have shown potential to better influence long-term driver behavior compared to education alone. Adding community service or post-program monitoring gives participants additional incentives and structure to avoid repeat offenses. By adding corrective components like community service or post-program probation periods, participants are more likely to reflect on their actions and stay violation-free (McKnight & Tippetts, 1997). Providing an alternative of post-program monitoring would ensure drivers have committed to better driving while providing a work-around for those who are unable to commit the additional time constraint of the community service. These hybrid models can deepen behavioral change, broaden eligibility without compromising accountability, and increase local support for diversion as a public safety tool. In addition, we recommend increasing funding for driver education programs so that more individuals can have the option to participate and gain more confidence and skill behind the wheel prior to receiving a license.

Utilizing Technologies

Assessment of Alabama's Efforts to Utilize Technologies

As traffic-related fatalities and accidents continue to increase, states across the U.S. are increasingly turning to advanced highway and automobile technologies to promote safer driving behavior. These innovations range from smart infrastructure to AI-driven enforcement tools, each made to address specific challenges such as distracted driving, speeding, and congestion. While Alabama has made decent progress in implementing traffic safety technologies, many other states are implementing more in depth and advanced strategies. A closer look at these innovations reveals opportunities for Alabama to strengthen its traffic safety initiatives.

Compared to these forward-looking efforts, Alabama has taken a wait and see approach to highway technology. The state has implemented red light and speed cameras in certain jurisdictions, but their deployment is limited and regulated, as studies are required for implementation. These citations are not classified as moving violations and therefore do not result in points on your record, potentially reducing their effect. Speed enforcement is supported by cameras in select areas of

Alabama, with civil fines ranging from \$60 to \$110. However, broader implementation and integration into traffic systems remain limited. In terms of legislation, Alabama introduced a hands-free law in 2023, with full enforcement beginning in June 2024. The law escalates fines and license points for repeat offenders and allows police to pull over drivers for using a handheld device and displaying distracted behavior, which marks a strong step forward in curbing distracted driving. Fines range from \$100 to \$200, and 2-3 points can be added to your driving record (Koplowitz, 2024).

Other States' Strategies to Utilize Technology

Georgia, Florida, and New York have implemented many kinds of technology-driven approaches. Georgia's Department of Transportation (GDOT) launched the "Reach Home Safely" mobile app in August 2024, aimed at reducing distracted driving. By creating a "safest driver" contest and partnering with the Atlanta Braves for promotion and prizing, Georgia is using positive reinforcement to promote safe driving behavior. The app was developed by CMT (Cambridge Mobile Telematics). CMT states that using apps like Reach Home Safely have resulted in a decrease in distracted driving by 48%. CMT estimates that the state of Georgia could prevent 4,100 crashes, 19 fatalities, and \$160 million in economic damages annually by reducing distracted driving by just 10% (Georgia Department of Transportation Launches Safe Driving App "Reach Home Safely", 2024).

A study done by AAA investigated how smartphone apps might have a positive impact on road safety by curbing risky driving behaviors like speeding, hard braking, and rapid acceleration (Edmonds, Do Smartphone Apps Hold the Key to Safer Drivers?, 2025). Through a 12-week randomized trial involving over 1,400 participants, researchers found that positive feedback and incentives led to measurable improvements, with a 13% reduction in speeding, 25% reduction in rapid acceleration, and 21% in hard braking. Interestingly, while handheld phone use remained unchanged, the study revealed that drivers were highly motivated by the potential to earn rewards and receive personalized feedback. Even after incentives ended, many participants maintained safer habits, suggesting that positive reinforcement could be a powerful tool for long-lasting behavioral change.

New York has been exploring "textalyzer" technology that could allow law enforcement to determine if drivers involved in an accident were actively using their device at the time of the

accident, without a warrant. Law enforcement would have no access to personal information on the devices. There is a prototype, created by the Israel-based tech company Cellebrite, which has been introduced to stakeholders but cannot be used without legislative authorization. It is a tablet that plugs into an individual's cellular device and determines what apps were open, what apps were being used, and time stamps to determine if they were being used at the time of the crash (Solly, 2017).

Other states are initiating technological infrastructure remedies. For example, Utah has implemented smart intersections that use lidar technology to adapt traffic signals based on real-time conditions to ease congestion and increase the flow of traffic. This smart intersection, located in Murray, Utah is the first of its kind in the United States (Collins, 2024). Similarly, Colorado and Washington are using variable speed limit signs that respond dynamically to road conditions, weather, and traffic volume (Parkins, 2024).

Improving infrastructure on roadways has been consistently shown to enhance driver behavior and significantly reduce crash rates. For example, modern roundabouts significantly improve safety and operational performance when replacing traditional intersections. According to research cited by the American Society of Civil Engineers (Reid, 2021), converting traditional intersections to modern roundabouts results in a 72 to 80 percent decrease in injury-causing crashes. These improvements are mainly due to design elements such as splitter islands and deflected entries, which help drivers stay at appropriate speeds for roundabouts, which are 15–20 mph for mini-roundabouts, less than 25 mph for single-lane, and up to 30 mph for multilane configurations. Also, roundabouts reduce vehicle-to-vehicle conflict points from 32 at a standard four-leg intersection to just 8, lowering the risk of severe wrecks. These statistics indicate that modern roundabouts likely enhance both traffic safety and efficiency (Reid, 2021).

Other infrastructure modifications, such as road diets, where travel lanes are reduced and reallocated, can lower crash frequency by 19–47%, particularly in urban and suburban settings (Knapp, et al., 2014). The adoption of Complete Streets elements, including sidewalks, medians, enhanced signage, and lighting, also leads to measurable safety improvements. For example, the presence of sidewalks alone has been shown to reduce pedestrian crash risk by up to 88% (Developing Crash Modification Factors for Separated Bicycle Lanes (FHWA-HRT-23-025), 2023) (Developing Crash Modification Factors for Separated Bicycle Lanes (FHWA-HRT-23-

025), 2023). These findings support a strong recommendation for investment in infrastructure improvements as a central strategy to influence driver behavior and improve overall traffic safety.

Another example of technology use for safer roadways is found in Virginia. The state became the first to enact a law requiring intelligent speed assistance (ISA) devices for drivers convicted of excessive speeding, specifically those exceeding 100 mph. Virginia's Intelligent Speed Assistance Program, established under House Bill 2096, requires certain reckless drivers to install GPS-enabled speed-limiting devices in their vehicles; the program goes into effect on July 1, 2026. Washington State followed suit, passing a law mandating speed-limiting devices for individuals whose licenses were suspended due to reckless driving. The law allows judges to impose the technology as a condition for reinstating driving privileges. Additionally, Washington, D.C., has implemented similar measures. Washington D.C.'s Strengthening Traffic Enforcement, Education, and Responsibility (STEER) Amendment Act of 2024 became effective April 20, 2024. The push for the Washington D.C. bill followed an increase in traffic deaths (Smith, 2024). Other states, including Georgia, New York, and California, are considering similar legislation.

Beyond state-run programs, private sector technology offers potential solutions. Apps like AT&T's DriveMode and CellControl's DriveID block text alerts, emails, messages, and even remove the use of your camera when a vehicle is in motion to reduce distracted driving. These apps also support emergency calling in case of a crash and can track phone usage for insurance-based discounts and incentives (Reports, 2017).

Recommendations

We recommend the state of Alabama incorporate use of intelligent speed assistance technology for drivers convicted of reckless driving or excessive speeding. The State of Alabama would greatly benefit from constructing and implementing a law that would allow the use of technology such as speed limiters as a condition for driving privilege reinstatement as Washington, D.C., Virginia and New York have recently enacted. Proactively limiting a driver's ability to potentially cause irreparable harm or fatalities could save lives and reshape a driver's behavior.

While Alabama has taken some steps, particularly with its hands-free law, there remains a significant opportunity for the state to expand its use of some of the above-mentioned intelligent transportation technologies. We recommend improving infrastructure by incorporating the use of

smart intersections, traffic monitoring, and variable speed signage across the state. Use of these technologies could lead to improvements in road safety and congestion. Collaborating with the private sector to promote safe habits and expanding the use of traffic cameras could further encourage better driver behavior. Technology in highway and automobile systems is improving traffic safety across the United States. From mobile apps and speed-reducing infrastructure, states are finding new ways to positively influence driver behavior and reduce accidents. The adoption of speed-limiting technology represents a proactive approach to mitigating reckless driving. As more states consider similar legislation, the effectiveness of these measures are being monitored to assess their impact on road safety and driver behavior. Alabama has taken steps in this direction, but there is still room for improvement. By learning from other states and investing in some of the same solutions, Alabama can better protect its drivers and have safer roadways for all.

Summary

Changing Driver Behavior in Alabama – Recommendations	
Increasing Seat Belt Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase penalties for seat belt violations • Expand the Alabama Department of Public Health’s car seat voucher program and car seat clinics to more Alabama Counties • Launch youth-focused seat belt education
Diversion Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a standardized statewide traffic diversion program • Refine diversion programs to include corrective actions like community service and probationary monitoring • Increase funding for Driver Education programs in schools
Utilizing Technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement intelligent speed assistance technology for offenders • Improve infrastructure by using smart intersections, traffic monitoring, and variable speed technologies • Promote positive reinforcement campaigns

What can each of us do to improve our behavior behind the wheel? Make a conscious effort to eliminate distractions and resist the urge to glance at your mobile device. Instead, pull over to a safe location, such as a parking lot or rest area, before reading or responding. Avoid the temptation to scroll through social media, watch videos, or engage in messaging while driving, as these activities significantly impair your focus. Consider activating your phone's "Do Not Disturb" feature while driving to silence notifications. If you have a passenger, delegate the task of responding to calls or messages to them, allowing you to concentrate solely on driving. "Slow Down" and "Move over" for any roadside assistance vehicles, highway traffic stops, and work zones when workers are present. Between 2015 and 2021, there were 123 roadside assistance providers killed by passing vehicles and a tow truck driver is killed at the roadside every other week according to American Automobile Association (AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2024). By taking these precautions, you can significantly reduce your risk of accidents and contribute to safer roads for everyone. As Robert Collier said:

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out" – Robert Collier

Conclusion

In conclusion, since the beginning of the 2020 pandemic, traffic has become increasingly more dangerous. Common causes of traffic fatalities are speeding, driving impaired, and the absence of seat belt usage. Various stakeholders and partnerships work throughout the state to reduce fatal crashes. Through various programs, Alabama works diligently to decrease motor vehicle fatalities. Based on our research, we have derived various approaches to improve driver behavior – increasing penalties for seat belt violations, expanding ADPH's booster and car seat programs throughout the state, launching a youth-focused education program, establishing a statewide program to standardize traffic diversion across counties while regulating the courses used and integrating behavioral accountability components, increasing funds for driver education programs, using additional intelligent transportation technologies, collaboration with the private sector to promote safe habits, adoption of speed-limiting technology and expanding the use of traffic

cameras in Alabama. Our research shows that these recommendations could be beneficial to Alabama. It should be noted that Alabama has made commendable efforts to improve safety on the roadways. However, there is still room for improvement. By working together, we Alabamians can make the roads safer not only for ourselves but for everyone who visits our beautiful state. Just as ALDOT encourages, let's drive safely, Alabama!

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