

April 28, 2021

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We, the undersigned, represent leading national roadway safety organizations in the United States that have advocated for stronger traffic safety laws and have overseen the implementation of traffic safety programs for decades. We have been instrumental in such efforts as strengthening federal, state and local laws to curb impaired driving, set appropriate speed limits, prevent distracted driving, ensure use of seat belts and proper child restraints, among other safety-enhancing and life-saving policies that benefit all road users.

Disparities and barriers encountered by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in our mobility systems are intolerable. We would like to work collaboratively with you and your team to identify and implement solutions to address this critical problem without impeding legitimate traffic enforcement that is proven to save lives.

The toll of life changing injury and death on our roadways is an ongoing public health crisis with more than 2.7 million Americans injured and another 36,500 killed every year. Preliminary statistics suggest that despite fewer drivers on the road, we are on track to see an increase in traffic fatalities according to 2020 data, after years of minor decreases.

Fair and just enforcement of traffic safety laws will continue to be a critical component of our immediate efforts not only to reverse the troubling trend of increased fatalities, but also to make meaningful long-term reductions in traffic fatalities and injuries. Best practices and transparency are critical components of accomplishing these goals.¹

We applaud the Department of Transportation's renewed focus on both safety and equity. To that end, we strongly urge you to support funding for and bolster proven-effective traffic safety countermeasures like high visibility enforcement (HVE) programs while ensuring they are fair and just. HVE is well-publicized, concentrated and purpose-driven enforcement combined with highly visible education efforts. It has been shown² to change unlawful traffic behaviors, and to reduce traffic crashes, injuries and deaths through deterrence. Over time, HVE may yield decreased traffic stops and citation counts. Elimination of well implemented programs may lead to an increase in traffic stops and citations, and an increase in traffic injuries and deaths.

¹ See the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Hearing, Examining Equity in Transportation Safety Enforcement, testimony available [here](#).

² See evaluation studies conducted by the [Centers for Disease Control](#) and the [U.S. Government Accountability Office](#).

We want a society where people can live to their full potential. To get there we must believe, advocate and engage in the prevention of violence and traffic-related injury on our roads. Together we can identify and promote actionable, data-driven solutions to ensure fair, equitable and consistent enforcement of traffic safety laws.

Sincerely,



Cc: Polly Trottenberg, Deputy Secretary of Transportation
Robin Hutcheson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Safety Policy
Steven Cliff, Acting Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Ann Carlson, Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration