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BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSUMER  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION  
ON MOTOR VEHICLE AND HIGHWAY SAFETY, AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

April 11, 1991

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee.

It is a pleasure to appear before you today to testify on motor vehicle and highway safety, and the activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). With me at the witness table are Barry Felrice, Associate Administrator for Rulemaking, William Boehly, Associate Administrator for Enforcement, George Parker, Associate Administrator for Research and Development, Adele Derby, Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs, and Don Bischoff, Associate Administrator for Plans and Policy.

Much has happened since I appeared before you at my nomination hearing in October 1989. Let me review our accomplishments and plans for the future and summarize our recent legislative proposals and authorization requests. We begin with the broad problems NHTSA is dealing with, our statutory and mission objectives, and the current traffic safety picture.

Motor vehicles give us extraordinary mobility, but their benefits are not without costs. Each year motor vehicle crashes cost America \$74 billion in economic losses. But beyond that, the true currency of crashes is tragedy. Every day, more than 120 American families assemble at grave sites around the country to mourn the loss of a family member killed in a crash--frequently a young family member.

NHTSA's basic statutory mandate is to reduce the human and economic costs of motor vehicle crashes and the deaths and injuries from these crashes. We do this by conducting research to improve motor vehicle and highway safety, determining specific motor vehicle and highway safety problems that need to be addressed, setting standards and putting into effect programs to address these problems, and evaluating the results of our efforts.

For the first time in the agency's history, a President has set specific mission objectives for NHTSA. In 1989, the President adopted these objectives:

- o Reduce the death rate from motor vehicle crashes to 2.2 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled by 1992.
- o Increase safety belt use to 70 percent of all motorists by 1992.
- o Reduce drunk driving.

We have many programs and activities underway to achieve the President's objectives and, indeed, have already seen a reduction in the fatality rate to a 1990 record low of 2.1 deaths per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled--40 percent lower than the rate in 1980 when the fatality rate was 3.3 deaths per 100 million miles traveled. Approximately 151,000 more people would have died in traffic crashes from 1981 through the end of 1990 if the 1980 rates had remained constant.

Even more important, total highway fatalities have declined from 47,100 in 1988 to 45,500 in 1989, and to an estimated 44,500 in 1990. The decline in the total number of traffic deaths is even more impressive

when annual increases in the number of drivers and vehicles are taken into account.

MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY: NHTSA's authority under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act to issue motor vehicle safety standards continues to be our most systematic means of improving the safety of motor vehicles. We have been making significant progress in this area by doing more and doing it more quickly.

For example, in 1990 we issued 94 rulemaking notices, more than in any other year in the agency's history, far exceeding the annual averages of 62 in the Carter Administration and 72 during the Reagan years. And, we have issued an additional 37 in the first three months of 1991--again, a record pace. About 80 percent of these 1990 notices, including ones that denied or terminated rulemaking actions, imposed no new regulatory burdens. Most were requests for information, clarifications of existing rules, permission for new technology, eliminations of barriers to innovation, information to the public on various matters, and actions to allow manufacturers increased flexibility to comply with existing rules.

Besides processing more rulemakings, we have processed them faster, reducing our average completion time from 24 months in 1989 to less than 21 months in 1990. We expect to improve this further, as we strive to reach our goal of 18 months. Similarly, in responding to petitions for rulemaking from the public, we completed action on a record high of 89 petitions last year (compared to an average of 50 per year in the 1980s) and did it faster than ever--averaging under 4 months compared to the previous average of 8 months.

While many of our rulemaking actions support existing standards, the accomplishments noted above include a host of significant safety advances, such as the new side impact rule for passenger cars--the most important advance in motor vehicle safety since the Department's 1984 requirement for automatic crash protection. We also issued a series of regulations requiring that light trucks and vans meet safety standards equivalent to those for passenger cars, including final rules for automatic crash protection, head restraints, and rear seat lap/shoulder belts. We are very close to making decisions on final rules for these vehicles for roof crush resistance, side impact protection, and high-mounted stop lamps.

I recently testified before this Subcommittee on air bags and, at that time, discussed our final rule extending the automatic crash protection requirements to light trucks. I will not repeat that discussion, today. However, I do want to reemphasize how critical these systems are to our progress in vehicle safety in the 1990s. When these vehicles enter the U.S. fleet, we expect the effect of these systems on fatalities and serious injuries will be dramatic, saving as many as 2,000 additional lives each year.

In January of last year, we published our evaluation plan for automatic restraint systems. Three distinct types of automatic protection--air bags, 2-point automatic belts, and 3-point automatic belts--are currently in production. The primary purpose of the evaluation is to determine the costs, benefits, and performance of these systems. The evaluation plan

consists of a series of data-gathering and analysis projects scheduled for 1990-1994. The first interim report will be completed this year.

School buses, our safest type of motor vehicle, carry millions of our youngsters each day. No cargo is more precious. Our school bus safety regulations are part of a continuing process to ensure the highest degree of protection for school children.

The agency issued two notices of proposed rulemaking last month. One would require improvements in the strength of body joints; the other would require more emergency exits in full-size school buses. We are also nearing a decision on a final rule for stop arms and a notice of proposed rulemaking on mirrors. And, we are currently seeking comment on a report prepared for us on school bus flammability by the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Center for Fire Research.

Also in the area of child safety, we announced in February a proposed new registration rule requiring child safety-seat manufacturers to provide postage-paid registration cards with each new seat so owners can be notified directly in the event of a safety recall. This will ensure that manufacturers have a list of owners to contact if the seat is later found to have a defect. In some recent recalls, we found that manufacturers had no direct way to contact owners of defective seats. It is our tentative view that owners will be more likely to have recall work performed if they receive a personal notification from a manufacturer, as they do with motor vehicle recalls. To encourage public discussion of our registration proposal and to promote State and local child safety

seat programs, we are sponsoring a National Conference on Child Passenger Safety this May.

We are also in the final stages of preparing rules for two new test dummies to be included in our child restraint standard. These will be considered to expand the evaluation of child restraint systems. Other activities are underway to upgrade the child restraint standard, including efforts to assess the safety performance of booster seats.

As a follow-up to the President's management objectives for NHTSA and the Secretary's National Transportation Policy Statement, Moving America, we published a more specific set of priorities in Moving America Safely, NHTSA's Priority Plan for 1990-1992. In that document and its recent update to include 1993, you will see that this agency is currently engaged in a number of vital regulatory subjects, including decisions on light duty vehicle handling and stability (rollover), frontal and side impact head protection, and antilock brakes and improved conspicuity and rear underride guards for heavy trucks--just to name a few.

Other areas, such as improved frontal crash protection and pedestrian safety, are also being considered for rulemaking by the agency. We will be making regulatory decisions on these matters, based on our research and data analyses, over the 1991-93 period.

We have also broadened and improved our motor vehicle consumer information activities. Recently, we expanded our New Car Assessment Program (NCAP), which provides comparative frontal crash data to

consumers, to include projected results for certain 1991 vehicles that have not been redesigned since previous model year versions were tested. This information will give new car buyers more test results earlier in the model year, tripling the number of models covered by this program. We also included, for the first time, information on which vehicles have antilock brakes in the NCAP releases, published data on new car theft rates, and revamped our tire-quality-grading-standard news release. And, we have announced an expansion of NCAP next year to include stopping distance information.

To carry out our "open door" policy, which I believe in strongly, we have held a number of meetings over the past 16 months with consumer and other groups on our motor vehicle activities, such as conducting side impact tests in NCAP, and the retrofit of rear seat lap/shoulder belts, and the safety of vehicles powered by gaseous fuels.

One measure of NHTSA's performance is to compare the rules we have issued to the actions proposed under S. 673, the Senate-passed NHTSA authorization bill of the last Congress. That bill's principal purpose was to direct the agency to issue or amend a number of safety standards. In opposing the bill, we stated we already had the authority to issue the requested rules, subject to meeting the criteria of the Vehicle Safety Act--that is, if we found the rules to be "reasonable, practicable, and appropriate" for the motor vehicles to which they applied. Any legislation directing us to issue specified rules poses the risk that rules will be issued that do not meet the Vehicle Safety Act's criteria. Under agency rulemaking, NHTSA can ensure that rules meet statutory criteria and involve full public participation.

As can be seen by our track record, we have already taken action--particularly in the light truck safety area--on the majority of items in S. 673. We have declined to initiate rulemaking on a few issues in that bill, such as the requirement for 5-mph bumper performance. Manufacturers report that virtually all new cars are equipped with 5-mph bumpers. We also continue to oppose provisions that would affect the agency's actions in other respects. In particular, we opposed the provisions in S. 673 that would have permitted court challenges to the agency's decision to close safety defect investigations.

I mention this comparison of the actions we have taken to those proposed in S. 673 to show NHTSA's continuing commitment to making the most feasible vehicle safety improvements in the shortest possible time. In fact, this commitment is exactly why we did so much of what S. 673 would have required. While we share many of the bill's objectives, something would have to be basically wrong with the administrative process--a process the Congress itself established to deal with technically complex matters--to justify the bill's regulatory directions. We believe the regulatory process is sound, and that it should be allowed to continue to work as provided in the vehicle safety statute.

ENFORCEMENT: I will turn now to a brief discussion of the growing effectiveness of our enforcement program. By this program, we seek to ensure that any safety defects or failures to comply with our standards are quickly detected and remedied. The enforcement program is critical if we are to ensure that the drivers and occupants of motor vehicles are not exposed to an unreasonable risk of injury.

For example, MY 1990 passenger cars--those built after September 1, 1989--mark the beginning of a new era in motor vehicle safety. These vehicles must all be certified to comply with our automatic occupant crash protection standard. Compliance with this standard will result in passenger cars that significantly reduce the risk of occupant injury. In FY 1991 we will test 30 vehicles to assess their compliance with the performance levels in this standard.

I am pleased to report that our oversight of the safety level of the motor vehicle fleet continued to improve in 1990. There were 141 safety defect vehicle recall campaigns for the year, involving some 4.3 million vehicles. Our 65 recall campaigns for non-compliances with safety standards involved another 1.7 million vehicles. Three-quarters of the total vehicles recalled were influenced by NHTSA investigations. We opened 256 investigations involving defects or non-compliances with standards. Significant 1990 recall campaigns included:

- o 9.7 million child safety seats from various manufacturers for safety defects or non-compliances with Federal safety standards.
- o 475,000 vehicles recalled for faulty rear-brake stop lamp switches.
- o 1.5 million vehicles recalled for safety belt problems.
- o 285,000 vehicles recalled for rear suspension corrosion.

We begin most of our investigations because of owner complaints. Many of these owner reports are initiated as calls to our toll-free Auto Safety Hotline. Through intensive publicity about the hotline and improvements in its staffing and equipment, we have significantly improved our ability

to respond to reported problems. In 1990, we increased the telephone capacity of the hotline by adding 10 lines, for a total of 27. We handled 433,000 consumer calls in 1990, providing safety information and gathering leads for enforcement action. This is an increase of 38 percent from the 313,000 calls in 1989.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT: Let me now outline our research and development efforts, and the groundwork we are laying for a new generation of safety improvements. During the next 10 to 15 years, many new improvements in the safety of motor vehicles, such as air bags and antilock brakes, will become standard equipment on the vehicles in the U.S. fleet. New safety features are the product of years of research and development. Introducing new safety improvements into the entire fleet thus requires a long lead-time before their full benefits are realized.

The President, through his National Transportation Policy (NTP), has made a commitment to "cut the death rate and reduce the traffic death toll below the current level through the next decade, even in the face of increasing travel." To support the President's NTP goals and to meet our statutory mandates of future transportation safety, NHTSA developed and recently published an aggressive research and development plan. The research programs the plan describes bring together public and private sector skills and resources to provide the basis for future improvements in vehicle safety performance, driver behavior modification in areas such as drunk and drugged driving, and non-users of occupant protection systems.

Reducing deaths and injuries from traffic crashes in the years ahead will be difficult. We expect continued growth in motor vehicle travel and changes in the travel environment--more older drivers and pedestrians, more large-truck travel, greater disparity in vehicle size and weight, and increased congestion. These factors are likely to complicate our efforts to reduce traffic deaths and injuries. But new technologies and related strategies are being developed to address these emerging safety problems.

NHTSA's research agenda consists of programs in five basic areas: (1) crashworthiness; (2) crash avoidance; (3) highway safety; (4) crash data collection and analysis; and (5) technology transfer. I will touch on each of these areas briefly.

Crashworthiness research is aimed at improving safety in crashes by improving vehicle structure and interior occupant protection designs. These programs rely heavily on advances in biomechanics research, giving us the ability to develop rules that increase occupant protection, such as the new side impact requirements and the crash protection requirements that include the air bag. Some of the issues we are working on in this area include pedestrian protection, crash protection in rollovers, and increased frontal protection in higher speed crashes. We are also developing the next generation crash test dummy.

Crash avoidance research is aimed at improving safety by improving driver-vehicle interaction, and the vehicles themselves, in ways that help avoid crashes or reduce the severity of those crashes that are

unavoidable. This includes consideration of the relative interactions in crashes of driver, vehicle and highway/environmental factors. This is the area in which we are assessing the potential of intelligent vehicle-highway systems (IVHS), and developing a state-of-the-art driving simulator for performing human factors and IVHS assessments.

We are just beginning to see the introduction of a vast array of new driver information, communication, and vehicle control systems. These systems have the potential to help drivers sense impending dangers, overcome lapses in their judgment or skills, and even compensate for some of their errors. On one vehicle control system, antilock brakes, we will complete the tractor phase of our heavy truck antilock brake field test in July. This will allow us to make regulatory decisions on these devices in the near future.

The goal of our IVHS program, which we are conducting in partnership with the Department's Federal Highway Administration, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, and the Research and Special Programs Administration, is to demonstrate that improved crash avoidance performance of vehicles can be achieved through application of these advanced systems and technologies to motor vehicles, ensuring that the technologies are matched to the limitations and capabilities of the drivers.

On our National Advanced Driving Simulator project, we have completed the technical/economic feasibility and conceptual design study and we are conducting a competition among universities to select a host institution

for the simulator. The National Science Foundation is helping us, and we expect to receive their recommendation this spring. We are also developing a long-range research program for the simulator, in cooperation with the user community.

Highway safety research focuses on the main cause of motor vehicle crashes--human error--and how to improve highway safety by changing behavior. In this area, our main research efforts are in alcohol and drug-impaired driving, speeding, occupant protection and pedestrian safety. The goal of these efforts is to develop, test and evaluate methods to improve driving and pedestrian behavior which can be used by States and local communities in their programs.

Crash data collection and analysis research is carried out by NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis. The Center develops and uses large-scale automated data bases to support problem identification, program planning, and program evaluation for all of our programs. Currently, we are improving the quality of the data collected at a competitive cost, and expanding the data collected to include more detailed information. These improvements are essential if we are to develop more effective motor vehicle regulations, highway safety programs, and methods of problem identification and evaluation.

NHTSA's Technology Transfer program is defined in terms of information transfer in each of our areas of responsibility. For the first time this year, we will publish a NHTSA research journal. Each issue of the journal will include 3-5 technical articles and list motor vehicle and

highway safety research underway and recently completed: We are also planning to expand our activities to provide a better means of access to our research reports and data bases.

HIGHWAY SAFETY: I will now discuss our highway safety program, established by the Highway Safety Act of 1966. Under this program, NHTSA gives States and local communities technical assistance to develop and implement their highway safety programs and formula grants for their conduct of certain priority programs such as alcohol safety.

No review of highway and traffic safety would be complete without mentioning the leading factor in fatal and serious injury crashes--drunk driving. About half of all fatal motor vehicle crashes continue to be alcohol-related and about 80 percent of these alcohol-related fatal crashes involve a legally intoxicated drunk driver or pedestrian (i.e., with a blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) generally greater than 0.10 percent). That means alcohol impairment plays a role in over 22,000 traffic deaths.

Still, significant progress has occurred in recent years, largely as a result of two events: the development of laws such as the age-21 minimum drinking age and enforcement techniques to increase the likelihood of arrest and effective disciplinary action, and the growth of public sentiment against drunk driving, led by citizen activist groups such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID).

These events have produced significant reductions in drunk driving fatalities. Our traffic crash data show the proportion of traffic deaths related to alcohol declined from 57 percent in 1982 to 49 percent in 1989.

NHTSA's implementation of alcohol safety and drunk driving prevention incentive grant programs, under the authority of sections 408 and 410 of title 23, United States Code, has encouraged States to adopt proven drunk driving measures such as prompt license suspension and mandatory sentencing for repeat offenders. In FY 1990, we obligated a record of \$15.4 million in State alcohol safety incentive grants.

The anti-drunk and drugged-driving efforts described in our three-year priority plan should reduce alcohol-related crashes even more. Among these priority strategies are "on-the-spot" administrative license revocation of impaired drivers, lower blood alcohol limits, more severe sanctions for impaired driving convictions, expanded use of sobriety checkpoints, and testing drivers for drugs other than alcohol.

Administrative license revocation, which requires a motorist to surrender his or her driver's license to police following a DWI chemical test failure or refusal, serves to assure prompt sanctions and avoids the delays of congested court systems. We believe this administrative action may be the single most effective sanction available, and we have strongly supported the adoption of administrative license suspension laws. Last year, the agency formed a coalition with the National Transportation Safety Board and 30 other organizations to promote administrative license revocation for impaired driving. Six States have enacted these laws in

the past two years, bringing the total number of States with these laws to 37.

Sobriety checkpoints are an effective method to increase the actual and perceived risk of apprehension for drunk driving. NHTSA believes these checkpoints can be a key component of a drunk driving deterrence and enforcement program. The agency, in cooperation with the law enforcement community, has prepared guidelines for checkpoints, and is providing advice and assistance to police agencies in their implementation.

Following the Supreme Court's 1990 decision upholding the constitutionality of sobriety checkpoints, the number of States regularly using checkpoints increased from six to 17.

Another effective enforcement technique we are expanding is our Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) program. The focus of this program is to deter drug-impaired driving by increasing the actual and perceived likelihood that drug-impaired drivers will be detected, arrested, prosecuted, and appropriately sanctioned. The DEC program enhances deterrence by training police to recognize drivers impaired by drugs other than alcohol, and to identify categories of drugs causing the impairment. The officers are then certified as Drug Recognition Technicians. Police in 18 States are now using the DEC procedure, up from seven in 1988. At the end of 1990, our DEC program had trained 1,250 Drug Recognition Technicians in more than 120 police agencies.

A well-planned, highly visible public information effort is an essential component of a program to deter drinking and driving. One project in

this area we are especially proud of is the program called TEAM (Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management). The goals of TEAM are to develop sensible alcohol policies for professional sports and entertainment events and to enable stadiums and arenas to act as role models for community actions against drunk driving. Policies are adopted governing such factors as when and where alcohol is sold, serving size, cut-off times, and proper age identification practices.

TEAM is an outstanding example of public and private sector cooperation in the effort to combat drunk driving. In the past year, we have expanded membership in TEAM by adding the National Hockey League, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Communications Satellite Corporation, and MADD. The National Football League intends to join TEAM for the 1991-92 season. A recent evaluation of the program shows that it reduced alcohol consumption and alcohol incidents in major league baseball stadiums. We feel strongly that initiatives such as the TEAM program must be constantly developed to involve people at every level of the public and private sectors if we expect to continue reducing alcohol-related crashes.

Occupant protection, the use of safety belts and child restraints, is another of our highway safety priority programs. Currently, we are poised to push the safety belt use rate from its present 50 percent to the President's goal of 70 percent by the end of 1992. Nationally, belt use increased from 11 percent in 1982 to 49 percent in 1990. Much of the credit for this increase is due to the implementation of belt use laws. Today, 38 States and the District of Columbia have belt use laws in effect.

Studies of motor vehicle crashes show that front-seat occupants who do not wear safety belts are twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured as occupants who wear their belts. In 1990 alone, safety belts saved the lives of 4,800 front-seat passenger vehicle occupants and prevented 126,000 serious injuries. By raising belt use from 50 to 60 percent, we could save approximately 1,800 more lives and prevent 46,500 serious injuries each year. A 70-percent use rate could save another 1,850 lives and prevent another 48,000 serious injuries each year.

To achieve the 70-percent national belt use by 1992, this summer we begin the most intensive nationwide safety belt campaign ever devised. We might call it the "100 Days of Summer," because the emphasis will be undiminished from just before Memorial Weekend until just after Labor Day. Creative methods of impressing the eye, the ear--and the pocketbook--will deliver the plain common sense wisdom of fastening the safety belt.

The core activities of this campaign will place maximum emphasis on combined public information and concentrated safety belt and child passenger safety law enforcement efforts. The 12 States without safety belt laws will be encouraged to enforce their child passenger safety laws and to remind motorists to buckle up.

Some of the State and local activities this summer will include:

- o Enhanced belt law enforcement of 10-14 days surrounding Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

- o Press conferences 1 week before enforcement begins to publicize the new enforcement emphasis and the importance of buckling up on every trip.
- o Public information programs conducted by States and local communities 2-3 weeks before enforcement begins, using media materials emphasizing the national campaign theme: "Buckle Up! Avoid the Summertime Blues."
- o Surveys of belt use before, during and after the summer campaign.

National support for the campaign this summer will include:

- o Major press events conducted during "Buckle Up America Week" (the week before Memorial Day), throughout the summer, and during the September Wrap-Up.
- o Enforcement-related campaign materials provided to the States and local communities, including radio and TV public service announcements, print ads, and flyers announcing the 1991 Summer Campaign theme.
- o General "buckle up" messages delivered through a variety of media and public relations activities, including new Vince and Larry TV and radio announcements, safety belt messages on rush-hour traffic reports, safety belt promotions on "top-40" radio, and newspaper and magazine public service ads.
- o A National "70% By '92 Coalition" to generate support for the national campaign at the grass-roots level.
- o Results of the 19-Cities Survey of Belt Use to be featured in the kickoff and wrap-up events.
- o "Operation Buckle Down," a Federal grant program involving 30 belt use law States, will use police spokespersons to meet with police chiefs to promote participation in the summer campaign.

And the campaign will continue, throughout 1992, taking the effort to another crescendo in the summer of that year, leading to the President's goal of achieving 70 percent safety belt use. We hope to have your support and that of other members of Congress in achieving this goal.

Motorcycle safety is another one of our highway safety priority programs. Unhelmeted riders are three times more likely to incur a fatal

head injury and twice as likely to incur a head injury of lesser severity than riders wearing helmets. Today, 23 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico require helmet use by all riders.

Though wearing a safety helmet is the best defense against a head injury in a motorcycle crash, the best defense against having a crash in the first place is the knowledge and skill needed to ride a motorcycle safely. NHTSA strongly advocates approved motorcycle safety courses and, over the past few months, we have established working relations with various motorcycle "rights" groups, such as the Motorcycle Riders' Foundation, to cooperate on driver licensing and training activities. We will be doing even more in the education and training area in the future.

NHTSA's pre-hospital Emergency Medical Services (EMS) program is another highway safety priority program. Studies show that pre-hospital medical treatment of a crash victim by an Emergency Medical Technician results in a 9.5 percent greater probability of surviving than a victim attended by someone with only basic training.

We are concentrating our main EMS efforts in three areas. The first provides technical assessments of the States' pre-hospital EMS programs. We have completed eighteen of these assessments to date. The States are finding our evaluations very helpful, and they are using them to pass needed legislation, to obtain funds for their programs, and to plan for current and future needs.

The second EMS area of concentration is a course on the conceptual framework needed for the development of a trauma system at the State or community level. We gave eight workshops over the last year on this subject and we plan to expand this program in coming months.

The third EMS area of concentration is the application of a measure, known as a "sensitivity index," to evaluate the timeliness and appropriateness of EMS and other highway safety countermeasures for crash victims. The evaluation requires the linkage of several data bases, including police report, pre-hospital report, and hospital discharge report. The four States that have used this evaluation method have found it helpful, and the agency, in cooperation with the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR), will continue to provide technical assistance linking the data bases to the evaluation.

Each year about 7,000 pedestrians are killed and 110,000 are injured in traffic crashes. NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) jointly administer the section 402 pedestrian safety program, and over the last several years, our agencies have worked to ensure that these efforts are complementary. Recently, NHTSA and FHWA decided to sponsor a joint pedestrian safety program designed to provide resources and assistance to States and communities for community-based pedestrian safety programs.

During FY 1990, our joint activities in this area have included a community traffic safety grant program to improve pedestrian safety, with seven grants awarded in FY 1990 and five more scheduled for FY 1991. We

also are considering a joint rulemaking action to add pedestrian safety programs to the national program priority list under the section 402 grant program.

Last month, NHTSA and FHWA jointly issued a final rule providing guidelines to States for a uniform parking system for drivers with disabilities that limit or impair their ability to walk. The rule, required by a 1988 statute and developed with an advisory committee representing people with disabilities as well as State and local enforcement agencies, is designed to enhance the safety of these people and their access to parking spaces. By restricting qualifications for special license plates and placards, the rule will enhance the safety and fair treatment of disabled motorists, who face special problems when they travel due to the States' varied license plates and permits now in use.

Besides calling for reciprocity of enforcement among the States, the rule adopts the International Symbol of Access (side view of a person in a wheelchair) as the identifying symbol for vehicles occupied by disabled motorists, sets design and construction standards for parking spaces reserved for disabled motorists, and sets conditions for issuance of special license plates and for removable windshield placards to be hung from the windshield rearview mirror, when the vehicle is not in operation, for enforcement purposes.

Last April, NHTSA held a Traffic Safety Summit in Chicago--the first of its kind ever held--where 200 leading State and local law enforcement officials shared their views on how Federal, State, and local authorities

can better address problems such as drunk and drugged driving, speeding, safety belt use, and commercial vehicle safety. A Traffic Safety Summit Implementation Group was created to track the progress in carrying out the recommendations of this Summit, and to provide guidance to law enforcement officials on more activities that could be tried.

This June, we will sponsor Traffic Safety Summit II in Orlando, Florida for members of the judicial and prosecutorial communities. The subject will be one of NHTSA's major highway safety goals--how to improve the prosecution and adjudication of traffic safety offenses. The results of Summit II should help us to identify what we can do to back up our highway safety enforcement program with more effective prosecution and adjudication.

Now I would like to turn to the highway safety proposals and authorization requests we submitted last month.

HIGHWAY SAFETY PROPOSALS AND AUTHORIZATIONS: Authorizations for the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act expired at the end of fiscal year 1985, and the current authorization for NHTSA's highway safety program expires at the end of this fiscal year. S. 610, the "Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1991," includes our proposed reauthorization of the highway safety program, together with that of the motor vehicle safety and cost savings programs, for the next five years. It is based on the principles of the President's National Transportation Policy, developed with the assistance of experts in both the public and private sectors.

For highway safety, we propose to continue the section 402 State and community grant program as the core element of the Federal effort. This program, through its focus on essential State and local highway safety needs, such as drunk driving countermeasures and safety belt use actions, has been instrumental in improving public safety. The 402 program would continue to identify and keep current the most effective State and local programs for Federal financial assistance.

For our 402 program, we are requesting \$140 million for each of FY's 1992-1996, out of the Highway Trust Fund. Although this request discontinues the current practice of earmarking 402 funds for various purposes to permit greater flexibility in State expenditures, \$25 million of these funds are to be set aside each year for a new Safety Bonus program, jointly managed by NHTSA and FHWA.

The Safety Bonus program is designed to give new momentum to the 402 program by rewarding States with bonus funds for adopting criteria to advance State and local highway safety programs within the 402 framework. These criteria, which are assigned credit values for computing the bonus amounts, would encourage proven drunk driving measures, such as prompt license suspension and mandatory sentencing for repeat offenders. It also would promote other high-priority programs such as those for increased safety belt use, public campaigns directed at high risk driving behavior, emergency medical services, and pedestrian safety.

Bonus funds will come from annual \$25-million set-asides in each of NHTSA and FHWA's 402 programs, as well as \$25 million authorized each year, out of the Highway Trust Fund, for alcohol safety programs. Bonus funds will be also set aside from FHWA's Urban and Rural Program, starting at \$5 million in FY 1992, \$55 million in FY 1993, then rising \$25 million per year until it reaches \$130 million in FY 1996.

Our proposal also retains the basic components of the section 403 highway safety research and demonstration program, which stresses research on such topics as the effects of alcohol and drugs on driver behavior, and adds research activities on biomechanics research that focus on the injury tolerances of older drivers and pedestrians and on Intelligent Vehicle-Highway Systems (IVHS). In addition, authority is provided to undertake collaborative research and development, on a cost-share basis, with non-Federal entities to encourage solutions to highway safety problems and the marketing of related technology. We are requesting \$45,869,000 for FY 1992 and such sums as necessary for each of FY's 1993-1996 for our section 403 highway safety research and development activities.

OTHER AUTHORIZATIONS: I already mentioned our authorization requests for NHTSA's section 402 program, providing a set aside for the new, NHTSA/FHWA Safety Bonus program, our separate request for alcohol safety for the bonus program, and our request for section 403 highway safety research and development activities. We have three remaining requests, each funded by the Highway Trust Fund.

Our first request, \$68,722,000 for FY 1992 and such sums as necessary for each of FY's 1993-1996, is for our motor vehicle safety responsibilities under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966. Our second request, \$6,485,000 for FY 1992 and such sums as necessary for each of FY's 1993-1996, is for our consumer protection responsibilities under the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act. The funds for both requests would come from the Highway Trust Fund. The Department believes that, wherever possible, programs which benefit a specific class of users should be funded by those users. Since NHTSA's motor vehicle safety and cost savings responsibilities substantially benefit highway users, we believe the fuel taxes paid by those users, which supply the majority of the Highway Trust Fund's revenue, should be used to fund these programs.

The last request, \$6,131,000 for FY 1992 and such sums as necessary for each of FY's 1993-1996, is for our National Driver Register (NDR) program, the Federal program that assists the States in their exchange of information on the driving records of problem drivers. The NDR is in a multi-year transition to an electronic, interactive operation, as required by the NDR Act of 1982, and our request reflects the costs associated with the transition. Since the NDR is now operating at a level that clearly benefits highway users, we believe the funding for the program also should be shifted to the Highway Trust Fund.

This concludes my prepared remarks. I will be glad to answer any questions you might have.