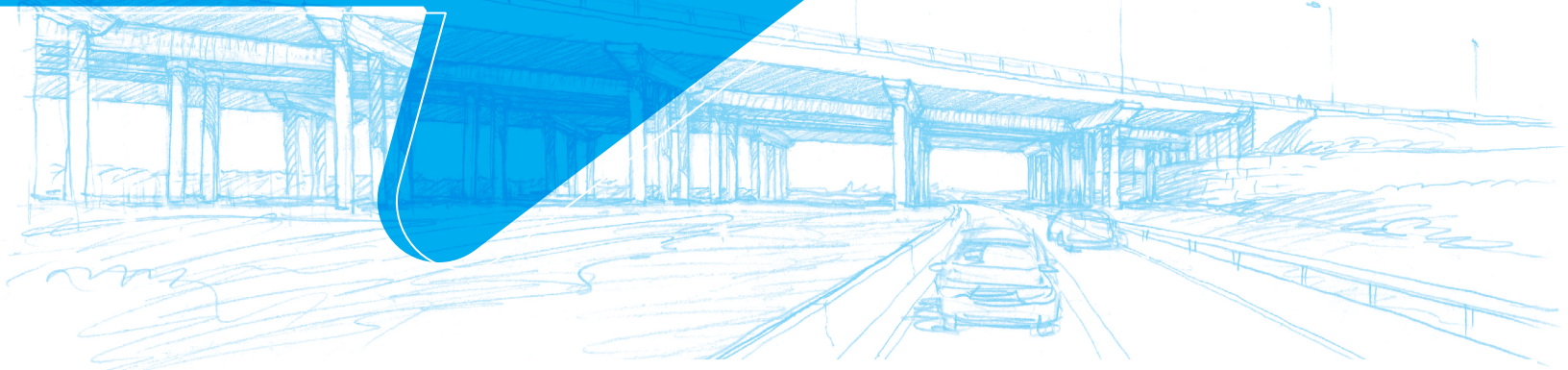




# Directions in Highway Safety

February 2020

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## GHSA Calls for New Approach to High-Risk Impaired Drivers



Highway traffic deaths fell in 2018, and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates for the first nine months of 2019 indicate that the numbers continue to move in the right direction.

However, zero is the only acceptable goal. To that end, GHSA, in partnership with Responsibility.org, released a new report in December that shines the spotlight on a major highway safety problem that continues to plague our nation's roadways – high-risk impaired drivers.

**"High-Risk Impaired Drivers: Combating a Critical Threat"** seeks to help State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) and their partners effectively address

these motorists who account for a disproportionate number of fatalities. Defined as a person who lacks the restraint or self-control to resist driving impaired, a high-risk impaired driver is likely to get behind the wheel with a BAC of 0.15 g/dL or higher, to have consumed a combination of alcohol and other drugs (polysubstances), and/or to have more than one DUI arrest.

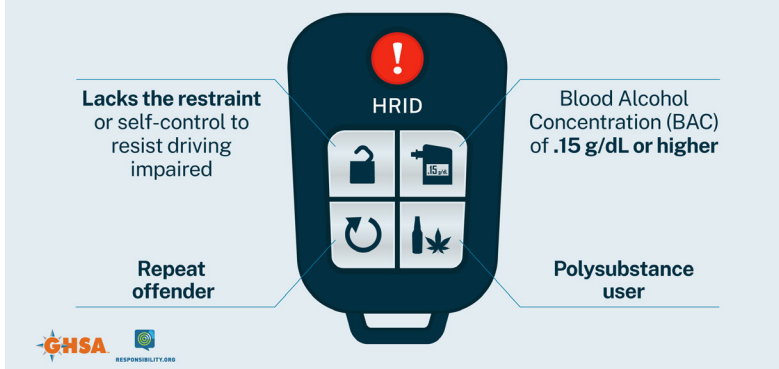
Repeat offenders cause about one-third of impaired driving

Story continues on page 2



# GHSA Calls for New Approach to High-Risk Impaired Drivers (Cont'd)

## Defining the High-Risk Impaired Driver (HRID)



**Alcohol, however, is not the only impairing substance, as there has been a 16% increase over the past 10 years in the number of impaired drivers killed in crashes who tested positive for both alcohol and other drugs.**

deaths annually, while high BAC offenders are involved in more than 60% of alcohol-impaired fatalities. In 2018, 66% of drivers involved in fatal crashes had a BAC greater than 0.15 g/dL. Alcohol, however, is not the only impairing substance, as there has been a 16% increase over the past 10 years in the number of impaired drivers killed in crashes who tested positive for both alcohol and other drugs. In addition, many of these offenders have not only a substance abuse problem, but also a mental health disorder, according to research conducted by Cambridge Health Alliance at Harvard Medical School. In many cases, the latter goes undetected.

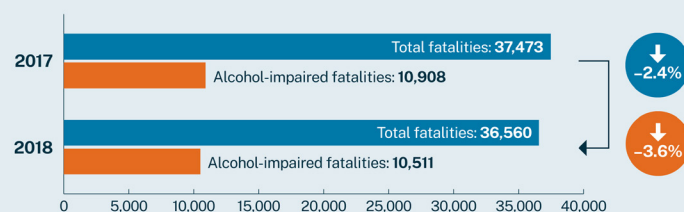
The report calls on states to expand the current approach of detecting, arresting and

convicting these offenders to include identifying and treating the root cause of their behavior. To do this, every offender should be screened and assessed as well as tested for the presence of not only alcohol, but also other drugs. Screening and assessment are clinical evaluation tools used to help

identify the DUI offender's risk of engaging in future impaired-driving events and to determine the most effective community supervision that will reduce that risk. By doing this, the courts – working collaboratively with law enforcement, prosecution, the defense, treatment, probation and driver licensing – can know the root cause of the individual's behavior and then determine the appropriate treatment and sanctions. This *individualized justice* approach, according to criminal justice and treatment experts, is more effective at not only deterring high-risk impaired driving – by all offenders – but also reducing recidivism and effecting long-term behavior change.

The report provides examples of how states and local jurisdictions are putting this approach into practice and calls on leveraging the expertise of a statewide DUI task force or commission to identify and address the challenges and barriers in a state's current system. Read the [report](#).

## National Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities, 2017-2018



**50:00** MIN SEC In 2018, an average of one alcohol-impaired driving **fatality occurred every 50 minutes**, which translates to 29 deaths each day.

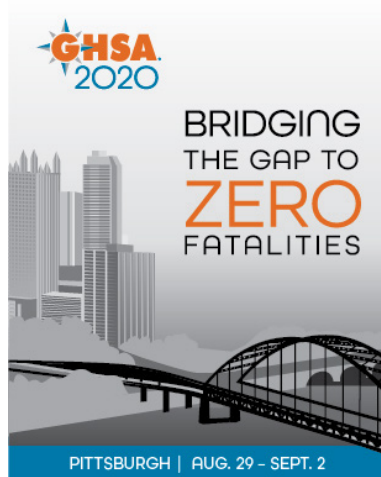


Jonathan Adkins  
Executive Director

# Report from the Executive Director

**GHSA has continued our strong relationship with new NHTSA leadership, including Acting Administrator James Owens, who visited our Executive Board in December.**

**I HOPE EVERYONE HAD A SAFE** and happy holiday season! As we make our plans for 2020, remember to save the date for GHSA's 2020 conference, "[Bridging the Gap to Zero Fatalities](#)," to be held Aug. 29 through Sept. 2 in Pittsburgh. At the conference, we'll examine collaborative approaches to reduce the number of crashes and save lives on U.S. roadways by uniting law enforcement, public education, advocacy and engineering.



Here in Washington, Congress has resumed work on the next transportation reauthorization, but the timeline to advance full reauthorization proposals is uncertain,

and time is running out before the FAST Act expires on Sept. 30.

GHSA has continued our strong relationship with new NHTSA leadership, including [Acting Administrator James Owens](#), who visited our Executive Board in December, and [Nanda Sriniwasan](#), NHTSA's new Associate Administrator for Research and Program Development.

In late 2019, we published two new reports on critical traffic safety issues: a [spotlight on rear belt use](#) and a re-examination of how to confront the challenging problem of [high-risk impaired drivers](#). Learn more about these publications in our cover story and on [page 4](#).

On Jan. 6, we launched a call for proposals for a new [speed management grant program](#) that will provide funding to conduct a comprehensive speeding-reduction project, including evaluation services. Applications are due March 1. Our Behavioral Traffic Safety Cooperative Research Program (BTSCR) is also [accepting problem statements](#) for new behavioral traffic safety research projects through

Feb. 21. Find more information about both programs within this issue of *Directions*.

Lastly, I am pleased to announce that GHSA is gearing up to offer states even more resources in 2020, through competitive grants that address both impaired and teen driving. We'll be launching another round of grants with Responsibility.org to bolster state drug-impaired driving detection training for law enforcement and implementing other recommendations to take an individualized justice approach to high-risk impaired drivers. In partnership with Ford DSFL, we are bringing back our popular teen safe driving grants to complement existing state programs. We will also be teaming up with Lyft again to offer states ride credits and cash to encourage Lyft use as an alternative to impaired driving over the 2020 holiday season. And we will be working with Uber as well on an exciting new project. Stay tuned for more details!

Here's to a safe and prosperous year ahead!

## GHSA Welcomes New Associate Members

The GHSA Board recently approved six new Associate Members:

- CellGuardians
- Hasner Law, P.C.
- Mirman, Markovits & Landau, P.C.
- SmartDrive Foundation
- Steven M. Sweat Personal Injury Lawyers APC
- Zavodnick/Zavodnick & Laskey

**Thank you for your support of GHSA!**



# From Washington



## New Grant Aims to Put the Brakes on Speeding

**SPEEDING IS A LEADING HIGHWAY KILLER**, accounting for approximately a quarter of U.S. motor vehicle crash deaths over the past three decades. To combat this problem, GHSA, in partnership with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and The National Road Safety Foundation, Inc., invites state agencies to submit proposals for grant funding to develop, implement and evaluate a com-

munity or corridor-based speed management pilot program. Up to \$200,000 will be awarded to a state or states to conduct a six-month pilot that employs low-cost, temporary engineering techniques, high-visibility enforcement, grassroots advocacy and public outreach. The requirements are outlined in an [RFP](#) released on Jan. 6. The deadline to submit a proposal is March 1.

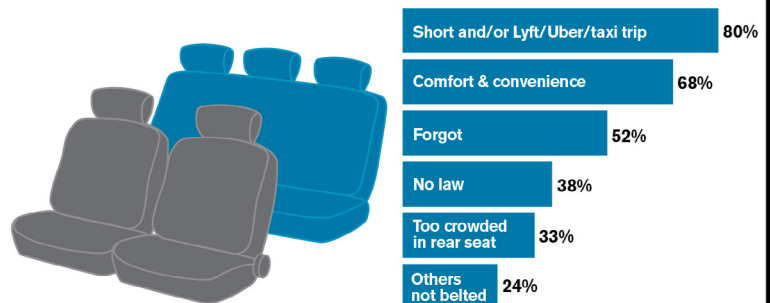
Why should your state apply? In addition to the grant funding, IIHS will work with the selected state(s)

to evaluate the pilot's impact and provide communications support. Assistance will also be provided by a senior GHSA staff member experienced in managing multi-disciplinary safety campaigns. But most importantly, the selected state(s) will be helping to develop, pilot and evaluate a program that will serve as a national template for addressing speeding. A pilot program is how the "Click It or Ticket" program was born, so this could provide an exciting opportunity to spark a nationwide trend. To learn more, click [here](#).

## New Report Reveals Half of Unbuckled Rear Passenger Fatalities Preventable

ON NOV. 18, 2019, GHSA released a new spotlight report: ["Rear Seat Belt Use: Little Change in Four Years, Much More to Do."](#) The report highlights new federal data showing that 803 unrestrained rear seat passengers age 8 and older lost their lives in 2018 alone, noting that more than 400 of those passengers might still be alive today had they fastened

### Reasons part-time users give for not buckling up in back



Source: 2016 Opinion America Survey

# From Washington



their seat belts. The report also shows that riders in taxis and ride-hailing vehicles buckle up in the back less often than in private vehicles.

The report makes the following specific recommendations on how lives can be saved by increasing rear seat belt use by adults:

- States should pass and enforce strong laws and publicize the benefits of belt use in all seating positions.
- For-hire vehicle services should actively promote belt use to their passengers.
- Vehicle manufacturers should install rear seat belt use reminders.
- NHTSA should develop programs and finalize federal rulemaking to require rear belt reminders.

As the report's author, Dr. Jim Hedlund, notes, "Collectively, these actions would go a long way toward increasing rear seat belt use to be more on par with front seat belt use. While the steps are straightforward, they will require persistence and commitment."



## Ford DSFL Plans 2020 Tour

**FORD DRIVING SKILLS FOR LIFE (DSFL) IS FORGING AHEAD IN THE** new decade with another ambitious national tour. The teen safe driving program will visit cities in Florida, California and Georgia during the winter season as well as 13 other states throughout the year. The program will host over 80 hands-on training sessions, reaching thousands of students across the country.

Training sessions help young drivers improve their skills in key areas such as vehicle handling, hazard recognition, space management and speed management. The training features teens getting behind the wheel and performing specially designed exercises to gain experience and improve their decision-making skills. Parents are an essential component to the training events and are encouraged to attend with their young drivers.

Interested in learning more about Ford DSFL and the dates of its national tour? Visit the [Ford DSFL website](#) for more details.

## Top G-HSA Tweets

Science is taking a closer look at the way we talk about car crashes and how that language influences our perceptions of blame. Instead of using the term "accidents," follow the [@APStylebook](#) and use "crash," as crashes are preventable. <http://bit.ly/36Js2Hd> @LAist

ICYMI: Buckle up in the back seat, no matter what vehicle you're in. G-HSA will be working closely with [@lyft](#) and [@Uber](#) in 2020 to reinforce this important safety message. <https://wapo.st/2ZZ4dIR> @JBergal #BuckleUp

# DID YOU KNOW ?



## Drugged Driving Growing Among Youth

**YOUNG PEOPLE GETTING BE-**hind the wheel while under the influence of drugs has always been a problem, and it appears to be getting worse. In 2018, 12 million Americans aged 16 and older reported driving under the influence of marijuana, and 2.3 million reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs other than marijuana during the prior 12 months, according to a new CDC study in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (Dec. 19, 2019). The study, "[Driving Under the Influence of Marijuana and Illicit Drugs Among Persons Aged ≥16 Years – United States, 2018](#)," finds that reports of driving under the influence of marijuana

were most common among those aged 21-25 years, followed by those aged 16-20 years, and drugged driving was more prevalent among males. Although we know that more than 10,500 alcohol-impaired driving crash deaths occurred in 2018, the contribution of drugs to these deaths and others remains unknown.

The study concludes that the development, evaluation and further implementation of strategies to prevent drunk and drugged driving – coupled with standardized testing of impaired drivers and drivers involved in fatal crashes – could help advance our understanding of drug- and polysubstance-impaired driving and assist states and communities with prevention efforts.

## Call for Research Problem Statements

**THE BEHAVIORAL TRAFFIC** Safety Cooperative Research Program (BTSCRCP) is looking for innovative research topics designed to benefit future behavioral traffic safety programs. BTSCRCP is a partnership between GHSA, NHTSA and the Transportation Research Board (TRB).

This program provides practical solutions to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce the costs of traffic crashes caused by unsafe behaviors. BTSCRCP encourages research for any traffic safety behavioral issues, including distracted driving, child passenger safety, alcohol-impaired driving, mature drivers, law enforcement or bicyclists and pedestrians. Any traffic safety professional can write or prepare a problem statement for consideration, but statements must be endorsed by an SHSO.

The deadline for submitting a problem statement is Feb. 21. The GHSA Research Committee will recommend, and the Executive Board will select, research problem statements for the FY 2021 program this summer. For selected problem statements, requests for proposals will be announced and contractors will be selected competitively.

View a current list of research projects and more information about BTSCRCP [here](#).

Learn more about submitting a problem statement [here](#).



# State of the States



The grant program was a great success in helping keep impaired drivers off the roads over the holidays.

## Lyft and States Work to Deter Impaired Holiday Driving

FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE year, GHSA and Lyft awarded five states nearly \$100,000 in grant funds and Lyft ride credits to support campaigns to deter impaired driving and encourage responsible road use this past holiday season. Specific state grant activities included the following:

- The [California Office of Traffic Safety](#) implemented its annual “DUI Doesn’t Just Mean Booze” campaign together with its “Go Safely California” effort to raise awareness of the consequences of impaired driving.
- The [Illinois DOT](#) worked with law enforcement to provide Lyft discount codes for free round-trip nighttime rides within Springfield and surrounding communities from Thanksgiving through year’s end.

- The [Maine Bureau of Highway Safety](#) created a “Lyft Lounge” in downtown Portland to provide voucher cards with codes for discounted rides from the Wednesday before Thanksgiving through New Year’s Day.
- The [Oregon DOT](#) offered Lyft credits for Friday and Saturday night rides this holiday season to people who engaged with the social media posts of selected partner agencies.
- The [Washington Traffic Safety Commission](#) encouraged sober rides during its annual holiday DUI campaign in four local areas: Bellingham, the Tri-Cities (Richland/Kennewick/Pasco), Spokane and Puget Sound (Seattle/Everett/Tacoma).

Overall the program was a great success in helping keep impaired drivers off the roads over the holidays.

## Responsibility.org Honors Arizona’s Gutier

IN DECEMBER, RESPONSIBILITY.ORG recognized Alberto Gutier, Director of the Arizona Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, as a recipient of the 2019 Kevin E. Quinlan Award for Excellence in Traffic Safety, the organization’s highest honor. During his long tenure, Gutier has managed one of the most innovative and effective impaired driving programs in



Brandy Axdahl, Senior VP at Responsibility.org, presents award to Gutier.

the country, helping to pass key legislation and leading the way in creating an electronic warrant system and a landmark law enforcement phlebotomy program.

## Hoosier State Seeks to Strengthen Distracted Driving

AN EXPANDED BAN ON INDIANA drivers using cellphones behind the wheel has become a top priority for Gov. Eric Holcomb during this year’s legislative session. Indiana’s current law addressing cellphone use while driving, passed in 2011, lists texting as well as sending or reading email as illegal. Other uses, including playing games, watching movies and checking social media are not explicitly stated and are therefore allowed, making the law extremely difficult to enforce.

Gov. Holcomb’s proposal would require hands-free devices for drivers and would allow them to use GPS applications on their phones. Currently, 21 states and four U.S. territories prohibit all drivers from using handheld cellphones while operating a motor vehicle.



Directions  
in Highway Safety

# GHSA Calendar



## **FEBRUARY 8-11**

**National Sheriffs' Association  
Winter Legislative & Technology Conference**  
Washington, DC  
<https://nsawinter.org/>

## **FEBRUARY 11-12**

**NHTSA Region 4 LEL Conference**  
Charleston, SC  
<http://bit.ly/2Tj6v4k>

## **FEBRUARY 15-16**

**Ford Driving Skills for Life**  
Anaheim, CA  
<http://bit.ly/DSFL2020-ca>

## **MARCH 10-11**

**Michigan Traffic Safety Summit**  
East Lansing, MI  
<http://bit.ly/384nqvI>

## **MARCH 15-17**

**Lifesavers National Conference  
on Highway Safety Priorities**  
Tampa, FL  
<https://lifesaversconference.org>

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