

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

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Graduated Driver Licensing

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House Transportation Committee

Eagle View Middle School  
6746 Carlisle Pike  
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

Tuesday, April 7, 1998, 10:00 a.m.

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BEFORE:

- Honorable Richard Geist, Majority Chairperson
- Honorable David Argall
- Honorable Dick Hess
- Honorable Dennis Leh
- Honorable Ronald Marsico
- Honorable Todd Platts
- Honorable Jere Strittmatter

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

- Honorable Patricia Vance
- Honorable Steve Nickol

KEY REPORTERS

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1 ALSO PRESENT:

2 Eric Bugaile  
Majority Research Analyst

3 Paul Gnazzo  
4 Majority Research Analyst

5 Paul Parsells  
6 Minority Research Assistant

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1                   CHAIRPERSON GEIST: We want to thank everyone  
2 for coming this morning. The reason we're all here today  
3 is based upon the licensing from 16-year-olds and up, and  
4 one of the other areas of this committee, Representative  
5 Marsico and I especially have been very, very deeply  
6 involved with is the upgrading of the commercial driver's  
7 license, the CDL, so that we get a sense of remedial  
8 education that goes along with that professional license.

9                   Today we're going to hear I believe a super  
10 lineup of experts. And before we do that, I'd like to  
11 introduce the folks that are on the panel. Two house  
12 members are not here. They're probably taking the tour of  
13 the Cumberland Valley campus, Representative Dick Hess and  
14 Representative Ellen Bard.

15                   To my right, a good friend and seatmate for a  
16 lot of years, Pat Vance. Eric Bugaile is our professional  
17 staff person, along with Paul Gnazzo and Paul Parsells.  
18 Left of me is Representative Ron Marsico who has done an  
19 outstanding job with truck safety, one of the leading  
20 advocates for safer roads. Beside him is Steve Nickol, and  
21 Steve is the legislator who is known for his work on the  
22 liquid fuels. The guy third from his left is Paul Parsells,  
23 Democratic staff of this committee.

24                   Our first witness this morning is -- it looks  
25 like H. David Secrist, Safety Education Coordinator,

1 Pennsylvania Department of Education, along with Rebecca  
2 Bickley, Director of Bureau of Drivers Licensing for  
3 PennDOT. And I also should mention the proud mother of a  
4 daughter who's about to graduate from law school.

5 I'd like to introduce Representative Dave Argall  
6 who was taking the tour of the campus.

7 MR. SECRIST: Representative Vance, Mr.  
8 Chairman, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the  
9 opportunity --

10 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: If you want to paraphrase  
11 your testimony and talk, I think that would really be a lot  
12 better. We're going to read these anyhow. So if you want  
13 to really make the highlights of everything you talk about  
14 in our limited amount of time then we can accomplish a lot  
15 more.

16 MR. SECRIST: Sure. Thank you for the  
17 opportunity to participate in this panel discussion and to  
18 talk about the issue of graduated driver licensing. Each  
19 year traffic accidents are the number one cause of death to  
20 teenagers. In fact no other form of injury or disease poses  
21 a greater threat to safety. Consider the following facts  
22 and statistics offered by organizations such as the National  
23 Highway Traffic Safety Association, the American Association  
24 of Motor Vehicle Administrators, and the American Driver and  
25 Traffic Safety Education Association.

1                   And as you suggested, I'll paraphrase them  
2 throughout a lot of my testimony. Some of these statistics,  
3 40 percent of all fatalities among teens ages 15 to 19 occur  
4 from motor vehicle crashes. Crash rates are high largely  
5 because of young drivers' immaturity and the lack of driver  
6 experience.

7                   Because the statistics concerning young drivers  
8 are so serious, organizations such as those that I mentioned  
9 have implemented a graduated drivers license system. A  
10 graduated license system eases young drivers into the  
11 driving environment under safer conditions prior to full  
12 unrestricted licensure.

13                   And the system consists of three stages, the  
14 learner's permit, the intermediate license and the full  
15 unrestricted license. Young drivers are required to  
16 demonstrate responsible driving behavior in each stage of  
17 licensing before advancing to the next.

18                   And then I listed in my testimony those states  
19 that have the component of a graduated licensing system.  
20 And Pennsylvania is one of the eight states that has a  
21 three-stage licensing system. What I'm proposing is that we  
22 extend that period that we currently have on the learner's  
23 permit that now amounts to two to three weeks and I would  
24 like to see longer period of time.

25                   Then I've listed other states that have other

1 components not quite as complete as the original eight of  
2 Pennsylvania, California, Colorado, Maryland and others.

3           And if these statistics mentioned aren't  
4 convincing enough, the AAA reports the following. In 1996,  
5 6,300 teens died and 600,000 others were injured in  
6 teen-related crashes. And with an expected 25 percent teen  
7 population increase by the year 2012, more than 7500 teens  
8 could die and nearly 745,000 could be injured annually in  
9 car crashes.

10           Given these facts it is easy to understand why  
11 most adults favor improved and increased driver education  
12 and phased driving privileges for teens. In 1993 the  
13 Department of Transportation provided federal funds to the  
14 Department of Education to develop an enhanced driver  
15 education curriculum, and the Department of Education then  
16 contracted with Indiana University of Pennsylvania to write  
17 the curriculum and to conduct the pilot study in school  
18 districts throughout Pennsylvania from 1993 to 1997.

19           Twenty-seven schools participated as treatment  
20 schools and 15 as control schools. By treatment schools I  
21 mean those schools that implemented the enhanced driver ed  
22 program. Control schools were those schools that followed  
23 their own program.

24           The enhanced driver education program focused on  
25 four major concepts -- decision making, visual training,

1 nighttime driving and parent participation. The study  
2 concluded some of the following statements and results.  
3 Parents in both groups were more critical of their beginning  
4 driver's ability in eight of the fourteen driving tasks.  
5 Parents in the treatment group showed greater tendency to  
6 provide for supervised practice on the learner's permit than  
7 the parents in the control group. There was a larger  
8 percentage of parents in the treatment group who provided 37  
9 or more hours of supervised practice on the learner's  
10 permit, and the parents in the treatment group were more  
11 critical of their new driver using their safety belts as  
12 either drivers or passengers. And this was interesting, the  
13 most frequent response for the students in both groups when  
14 asked how many months should a driver be required to  
15 practice on a learner's permit before taking the test was  
16 two months. Parents from both groups said three months.

17           The greatest risk of both groups of students in  
18 having a collision occurred within the first six months of  
19 receiving a driver's license, and that's why states like  
20 Michigan have implemented a graduated driver's license where  
21 the student must drive on a learner's permit for six  
22 months.

23           Involving the parents in the teaching and  
24 learning process produced a proactive parent in regards to  
25 the driver education program and the training of the new



1 driver evident in the following areas -- critical assessment  
2 of the various driving tasks, providing the opportunity to  
3 experience in practice and selected driving environments,  
4 the amount of supervised practice time and their overall  
5 assessment of driver education and its purpose.

6           And this was another point, if we want the  
7 parents to be involved and if we feel that parent  
8 participation is important, and I do and I know that all of  
9 our driver ed teachers do, then we have to provide more time  
10 for them to assist their sons and daughters.

11           If society is serious about reducing the young  
12 drivers problem, it must bite the bullet and modify  
13 teenagers driving through graduated licensing, says  
14 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Senior Vice President  
15 Allen F. Williams, there's no substitute for on-the-road  
16 road experience, but restricting the time and manner of  
17 driving in stages allows beginning drivers to acquire that  
18 experience in a low-risk setting before getting a regular  
19 unrestricted license. And it's no secret that immaturity  
20 and lack of driving experience are the main reasons for  
21 young drivers high crash rates. And then the immaturity  
22 associated with youth is manifested in risky practices like  
23 speeding, following too close and accelerating rapidly and  
24 maneuvering in a variety of aggressive ways that heighten  
25 the likelihood of a crash.

1           Some states require all students to complete  
2 driver education instruction before they are able to get a  
3 drivers license. Michigan is an example. In Pennsylvania  
4 the standardized driver education program, 30 hours in the  
5 classroom, six behind the wheel, is taught in 342 school  
6 districts. Classroom theory only is taught in 43 school  
7 districts. And 116 school districts have no program.

8           An estimated 72,000 students will complete the  
9 classroom theory, and 35,000 will complete behind-the-wheel  
10 instruction. Now, that's based on an average of about  
11 200,000 students in the tenth grade so you can see that  
12 we're not reaching even 50 percent of those students for  
13 classroom theory and, of course, a smaller fraction of  
14 behind-the-wheel instruction. Many schools have dropped the  
15 program and are considering dropping the program or have cut  
16 it back due to lack of funds.

17           I would support an extension of the learner's  
18 permit with parent supervision. With this provision and a  
19 standard seat belt law, I believe Pennsylvania would have a  
20 very complete graduated licensing system that would allow  
21 the young driver more time for instruction, practice and  
22 experience under the supervision and support of the parent  
23 or guardian. Thank you.

24           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. We're going to  
25 hold questions until Rebecca is done.

1 MS. BICKLEY: Thank you, Representative Geist  
2 and Members of the Committee, for the invitation to appear  
3 here today. It is indeed an honor.

4 Historically Pennsylvania has been recognized as  
5 a leader in graduated licensing, recognizing very, very  
6 early on, in fact decades ago, that young unskilled drivers  
7 who are immature and have a propensity towards risk taking  
8 are indeed a dangerous group of drivers.

9 Nationwide traffic crashes are the leading cause  
10 of death among our youth. That's a given. And Pennsylvania  
11 has been recognized in 1996 by the National Highway Traffic  
12 Safety Administration as well as the American Association of  
13 Motor Vehicle Administrators as one of only eight states  
14 that in 1996 had a three-staged graduated licensing  
15 program. NHTSA of the USDOT and AAMVA, American Association  
16 of Motor Vehicle Administrators, have defined graduated  
17 licensing as a three-stage licensing system, named by the  
18 type license possessed at each stage, learner's permit,  
19 intermediate or provisional license, and the full or  
20 unrestricted license.

21 As I mentioned, we in 1996 were one of eight  
22 states that had the three-stage licensing system. A very  
23 few states in the last 18 months have recently, very  
24 recently, joined our ranks.

25 Historically Pennsylvania's leadership has been

1 in the following areas. We have a learner's permit stage, a  
2 junior driver's license stage and a regular license stage  
3 for young inexperienced drivers. We've also incorporated  
4 historically the following factors -- restricted hours of  
5 driving unless supervised by a parent or guardian or a  
6 spouse at least 18 years of age, that is, no driving between  
7 midnight and 5:00 a.m.; a system of more rapid sanctioning  
8 when convicted of traffic offenses. We do suspend the  
9 driver's license of young junior driver license holders.  
10 The third component, successful completion of a certified  
11 driver's education program is required for issuance of a  
12 regular driver's license at age 17. Also required for  
13 issuance of a regular driver's license at age 17 is a clean  
14 driving record. We do not issue a regular license to  
15 17-year-olds unless they have no traffic convictions and no  
16 accidents for which we determine the young driver was  
17 partially or completely at fault. So you have to have a  
18 virtually clean record to secure a regular license at 17.

19           At the same time young inexperienced drivers  
20 have remained the highest risk drivers on Pennsylvania's  
21 roads. In recent years, that is the last two to three  
22 years, PennDOT has pursued the following enhancements to our  
23 graduated licensing program. We greatly improved the  
24 knowledge test in Pennsylvania, expanding the knowledge base  
25 to 279 questions on the computerized test. We no longer

1 look solely at signs and rules of the road, but we require  
2 every new driver in Pennsylvania to have broad-based  
3 knowledge of safe driving practices, how to avoid aggressive  
4 driving and to understand the repercussions of high-risk  
5 driving, and that is incorporated into the knowledge test.

6 PennDOT two years ago implemented a mandatory  
7 30-day waiting period for holders of a learner's permit.  
8 For drivers that we license today at driver's license  
9 centers for under 18, they must wait at least 30 days before  
10 we will give them a driver's test.

11 PennDOT has replaced all of its off-road courses  
12 with on-road testing of young drivers and all new drivers.  
13 We now take new drivers on the road in real traffic to  
14 determine whether or not they have the basic skills to  
15 handle a vehicle safely.

16 In partnership with the Department of Education,  
17 PennDOT funded the research project to develop and implement  
18 the greatly enhanced driver's education curriculum that Dave  
19 Secrist just described to you. And PennDOT in conjunction  
20 with members of the General Assembly also implemented zero  
21 tolerance for underage drinking drivers. That is in  
22 Pennsylvania today one drink for an underage drinking driver  
23 does DUI make. We are intolerant of underage drinking  
24 drivers.

25 Unfortunately, even with these program

1 enhancements, young inexperienced drivers are still the  
2 state's highest risk drivers. In 1996, 13 percent of  
3 Pennsylvania's 16-year-old drivers were involved in a  
4 reportable accident. That is a serious accident. And in  
5 fact one out of every eight young male 16-year-old drivers  
6 was involved in a reportable accident before their 17th  
7 birthday. Those facts speak for themselves in terms of the  
8 important safety issue that we're addressing today.

9           In light of this serious safety problem, PennDOT  
10 continues to evaluate the way in which we license young  
11 novice drivers and is considering the following enhancements  
12 to our graduated licensing system. One, both NHTSA and  
13 AAMVA recommend that the learner's permit stage last six  
14 months and that the young driver remain crash and conviction  
15 free during the learner's permit time frame before moving to  
16 a junior drivers license. Driving is a very complex  
17 psychomotor skill that can only be learned through practice,  
18 practice and more practice.

19           Two, NHTSA and AAMVA recommend that states  
20 require parental participation in assuring that young  
21 drivers acquire safe driving skills. Parental involvement  
22 is key to successful driver's education because extensive  
23 behind-the-wheel practice for a sustained time period is  
24 essential to developing safe driving skills and safe driving  
25 habits. PennDOT is considering that parents certify that

1 the novice driver had a minimum number of adult-supervised  
2 hours or miles of driving prior to giving a test at the  
3 driver license center. Based on my experience at driver  
4 license centers on the front line, I know that most parents  
5 show caring concern for the safety of their young novice  
6 driver. However, too often they do not understand the  
7 importance of their involvement to insure that the new  
8 driver practices extensively in order to become a skilled  
9 driver.

10           Three, NHTSA and AAMVA recommend that states  
11 adopt youth-oriented and more rapid improvement actions for  
12 junior license holders. Although PennDOT holds the  
13 authority to suspend junior drivers licenses up to 90 days  
14 or until the driver is 18, this authority is purely  
15 discretionary. PennDOT is considering changes to the system  
16 including the possibility that junior drivers who accumulate  
17 six points lose their driving privilege for a fixed and  
18 mandatory 90-day period.

19           In other driver safety areas the certainty of  
20 suspension has proved to be an effective tool in improving  
21 young drivers on-road performance. For example, when  
22 Pennsylvania's underage drinking went into effect in 1988,  
23 the number of underage drinking drivers involved in crashes  
24 declined immediately, dramatically, and the decline has been  
25 sustained. That is in 1988 there were 2,597 crashes

1 involving underage drinking drivers, and in 1996 that has  
2 been reduced to 1,275 crashes involving underage drinking  
3 drivers.

4           For junior license holders who accumulate six  
5 points for a second time, we recommend a mandatory  
6 revocation of the driving privilege until the novice license  
7 holder is 18 years of age. We feel that that group  
8 constitutes the highest risk of young drivers.

9           The fourth component is that PennDOT is  
10 evaluating the potential effectiveness of notifying parents  
11 when junior license holders are convicted of traffic  
12 offenses. Under Pennsylvania law parental consent is  
13 required for all drivers under 18 to hold a license. And  
14 parents may withdraw their consent for the driver's license  
15 at any time. In 1997 only 89 parents withdrew their consent  
16 and we want to ensure that they are aware of that  
17 authority.

18           PennDOT remains committed to continuing to  
19 improve the way in which we license young novice drivers and  
20 continue to refine our graduated licensing program.  
21 However, only through a partnership among PennDOT, the young  
22 driver and parents or guardians and law enforcement will we  
23 ultimately be able to ensure that every young driver be  
24 licensed has an opportunity to become a safe driver. Thank  
25 you.



1                   CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. We're  
2 going to open it up for a few brief questions from the panel  
3 of members. Before we do that, I'd like to introduce the  
4 late Dick Hess.

5                   The one thing we've been hearing out of all this  
6 is driver education. And Mr. Secrist's testimony it became  
7 very apparent that school districts have decided that the  
8 area they can cut is driver ed. From the statistics we get  
9 on the maiming and deaths on the highway, this committee, we  
10 will -- we want do everything we possibly can to make  
11 Pennsylvania safer. It almost dictates that we mandate a  
12 heavy program of driver education and behind-the-wheel  
13 education in the school systems in Pennsylvania. Is that a  
14 fair question to ask?

15                  MR. SECRIST: I think it's a fair question.  
16 That has come up in my time as a driver education  
17 instructor, as a former high school principal, and as the  
18 current safety ed coordinator. As I get out across the  
19 state and visit in school districts and talk to driver  
20 education instructors, I get remarks about why don't  
21 we -- why doesn't the state mandate driver education.

22                  And I also get the comment when are they going  
23 to increase the reimbursement. The reimbursement of \$35 per  
24 student has never changed. And I just simply say that is a  
25 concern that I share as well, but it is a legislative action

1 and this is something that you must discuss with your local  
2 legislators and make them aware of the need for this. But  
3 it's no secret school districts are dropping their programs  
4 because it is not mandated and it is not required and they  
5 cut it out of the budget.

6 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: When counting 346 kids that  
7 are killed in traffic accidents, it doesn't make sense to  
8 me --

9 MS. BICKLEY: Representative Geist, may I  
10 address that?

11 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: We're going to try to move  
12 this along. Otherwise it's going to be 3:00.

13 MS. BICKLEY: PennDOT, a number of years ago in  
14 the early 90s, funded a research project to determine if  
15 driver's education indeed does reduce -- PennDOT several  
16 years ago -- well, actually in the early 90s funded research  
17 to evaluate driver's education as it relates to safe driving  
18 practices.

19 And what we found out with what is the existing  
20 curriculum, not the enhanced curriculum, is that there was  
21 no real impact in terms of reducing accidents and  
22 violations. That's why we invested a lot of money and time  
23 in developing what we hope will be a more effective  
24 program. I think the first priority has to be requiring all  
25 school districts to adopt the enhanced curriculum. The

1 second phase would be to see if that does indeed reduce  
2 crashes, and if it does, then we would turn to the question  
3 of should we mandate driver's education across the  
4 Commonwealth.

5           And I believe Dave shares that position as the  
6 administrator of the drivers ed program.

7           MR. SECRIST: We're currently beginning the  
8 process of writing the new curriculum and we will do that  
9 within the next year and we will have a new curriculum in  
10 the hands of driver education instructors by September of  
11 1999. That will be the enhanced driver education  
12 curriculum.

13           Now, again that is not required, so we need to  
14 have some kind of requirement that says all schools will use  
15 this because as it currently stands they may or they may not  
16 use it. It is considered a program guide or an  
17 instructional guide for them.

18           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. To my right I  
19 see another -- Ellen Bard, Representative Bard from Cambria  
20 County. I'll turn the mike over now to Representative Pat  
21 Vance who was gracious enough to host us in her district at  
22 this absolutely gorgeous campus.

23           REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
24 I'd like to ask you about a couple of statements you made in  
25 your testimony. On page three you said PennDOT mandated the

1 30-day waiting period between the issuance of a license.  
2 Personally do you feel that that is an adequate time period  
3 or should that be elongated?

4 MS. BICKLEY: When we implemented it two years  
5 ago, we thought it probably was adequate. But our  
6 experience in testing young drivers it was such that at this  
7 point we think for young novice drivers it isn't adequate  
8 which is why we're considering lengthening the time frame.  
9 What we haven't been able to determine is what time frame  
10 would be the best time frame. We do know that the State of  
11 Ohio very recently put into place a four-month waiting  
12 period. Some states have begun implementing six-month time  
13 frames. We're not sure what the answer is in terms of where  
14 to break that.

15 REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: I notice in another  
16 paragraph you say in 1996, 13 percent of Pennsylvania's  
17 16-year-old drivers were involved in accidents. How does  
18 that compare to adults?

19 MS. BICKLEY: Quite honestly I used my age  
20 group. I'm 47 years old and people in my age group are  
21 represented at the rate of 1.9 percent of drivers in my age  
22 group in 1996 had reportable accidents. Something very  
23 interesting, if you look at drivers 75 and older, 1.4  
24 percent of the drivers 75 and older in 1996 had reportable  
25 accidents. So you're talking about an eleven-fold increase

1 in the accident rate when you look at 16 year olds. That  
2 drops at 17 to 9 percent.

3 REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: And one last question.  
4 You say on page six of your testimony for junior license  
5 holders who accumulate six points for a second time. Now,  
6 how do they accumulate six points to start with?

7 MS. BICKLEY: Okay. Pennsylvania has a point  
8 system where if you're convicted of moving traffic  
9 violations, depending on the severity of the traffic  
10 violation, we assign points. The most common offense for a  
11 young driver would be three or four points for a speeding  
12 violation. And so what we're talking about is two speeding  
13 convictions within a relatively short period of time. And  
14 the reason we're looking at these so aggressively is that we  
15 feel that those individuals are truly the high-risk young  
16 drivers.

17 REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: I'm not sure that's  
18 aggressive enough. Somebody accumulates six points a second  
19 time, you're talking about a driver who is reckless and  
20 under 18 years after age. I have really questioned whether  
21 that is restrictive enough.

22 MS. BICKLEY: Good question.

23 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Let's start down here. If  
24 you could make the answers brief and the questions brief, I  
25 would appreciate that because we're way over time already.

1 Any questions to my right?

2           REPRESENTATIVE BARD: Just a short question.  
3 Given that you're considering there should be a longer  
4 waiting period than 30 days the and recommendation by the  
5 authorities is a six-month waiting period, what would be the  
6 disadvantage of having six months period of time?

7           MS. BICKLEY: We talked with a fair number of  
8 parents at the driver license centers who feel that six  
9 months is too burdensome. They want their young drivers to  
10 be on the road more quickly. So we're trying to balance  
11 highway safety interests with mobility interests in the  
12 licensing process, which quite honestly is a conflicting  
13 balance in many regards in our business.

14           REPRESENTATIVE BARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Any other questions to my  
16 right? To my left? Representative Marsico.

17           REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Yes. Obviously we  
18 haven't talked about the practice time. You're saying an  
19 extension of learning time, practice time?

20           MS. BICKLEY: Yes.

21           REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: And one of you  
22 mentioned it's obvious that immaturity plays into all of  
23 this. Do you -- what are your feelings about raising the  
24 eligibility from age 16 to say 17 or 18 before getting a  
25 learner's permit?

1 MS. BICKLEY: In looking at what has happened in  
2 most other states, most other states have moved the learning  
3 stage back to age 15 and 15 and a half. Now, obviously  
4 given the influence of lack of maturity on safe driving  
5 practices, we don't want to it head in that direction, but  
6 if we had a six-month learning phase we literally would be  
7 slowing down the licensing process for 16-year-old drivers.

8 REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Nickol.

10 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Thank you. We have met  
11 last week, as you're well aware, in my district with a young  
12 man who been -- in the first 30 days of receiving his  
13 license, turning age 16, who made 9 points and the  
14 department gave him a 15-day suspended license for that.

15 In light of that I'm glad to see you're  
16 recommending a tightening of revocation for these drivers.

17 My question is does the department currently  
18 have the authority outside the point system to revoke the  
19 license of an operator on a junior license?

20 MS. BICKLEY: Well, as I mentioned, we have the  
21 discretionary authority. And quite frankly when we exercise  
22 the discretionary authority, we have to look at the  
23 individual's entire driving record.

24 The case law and the courts is such that it's  
25 discretionary, truly it has to be an individualized

1 assessment. The problem with that system what you're  
2 dealing with with 16-year-olds is that you lose the impetus  
3 of certainty of suspension. We think that programs are more  
4 effective for 16-year-olds and 17-year-old drivers when you  
5 know that there is direct cause and effect and that you're  
6 not going to be sitting with the driver safety examiner  
7 reviewing your record and the end result is one of  
8 discretion.

9 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Do you have that  
10 authority presently to make it nondiscretionary?

11 MS. BICKLEY: To make it nondiscretionary? No.  
12 The way the law reads is that we may, which means that we  
13 have to do an individualized review, and we have to exercise  
14 discretion. Quite frankly the courts would not sustain  
15 decisions that were nondiscretionary where the law clearly  
16 says that we should review the record and that we may make  
17 that determination.

18 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Have you  
19 considered -- when you talk about a graduated system, what I  
20 find curious is that the graduated system only exists up to  
21 18. Have you ever looked at the possibility of looking at  
22 the records of the 16- or 17-year-old -- why do we  
23 automatically give them a full license when you turn 18?  
24 Have you ever looked at taking the penalties past that age  
25 and giving someone a provisional license and lengthen the



1 time until they can get a full license?

2 MS. BICKLEY: Well, quite frankly, if you look  
3 at other elements of law, 18 is well recognized as the point  
4 at which a young person comes of age. It's the point at  
5 which in Pennsylvania you can enter into contracts and  
6 agreements and carry your own credit cards and your own  
7 credit history, so it seems to be well recognized as the  
8 point at which a young person becomes an adult in most  
9 instances.

10 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: No restrictions would be  
11 in your opinion reasonable after 18, having a bad record  
12 whether --

13 MS. BICKLEY: At that point we really feel that  
14 you should use the adult system once you reach 18.

15 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. Our  
17 next panel will be Charles Butler, Director of Safety  
18 Services for the AAA National, and a good friend of this  
19 committee, Ted Leonard, General Manager, Pennsylvania AAA  
20 Federation.

21 Before you start, in the interest of time, if  
22 you could paraphrase your testimony rather than read it.  
23 That will give ours folk here time to ask you questions.

24 MR. BUTLER: I think one of the great challenges  
25 that we have as safety professionals is to convince the

1 American public that you can't go from a rank beginner to a  
2 safe driver in one step. We've known that all along. And  
3 the reason that you can't is because it's too big of a step,  
4 that the first year of driving is very critical. And that's  
5 the reason why we need to help the young drivers to  
6 transition into this period of driving safely very slowly.

7           What we know is is that the per-mile fatality  
8 rate for 16-year-olds is about ten times that of adults. So  
9 over the past few years what we tried to do and what  
10 administration tried to do is to add a step. And that step  
11 is called the graduated driver license. And what the  
12 graduated driver license tries to do is to put certain  
13 provisions in place to make this transition a little  
14 easier.

15           And it tries to do that in three ways. It tries  
16 to do that by reducing exposure to risk, it tries to do that  
17 by improving a person's ability to cope with the risk, and  
18 it also tries to enhance their motivation to minimize risk.

19           What we all know is that the surest way to  
20 prevent people from being involved in motor vehicle crashes  
21 is to not let them drive at all. But what graduated driver  
22 license tries to do is try to control their driving in ways  
23 that let novices gain mobility and experience while keeping  
24 the danger to a minimum.

25           And what I'd like to do for a couple of minutes

1 is to talk about a number of different components that  
2 either reduces the risk or exposure, improves their ability  
3 and tries to enhance or to motivate young people to drive  
4 safely.

5           Let's talk about night driving restrictions for  
6 a minute. You might ask on the surface, well, what's wrong  
7 with driving at night. Well, first of all, it's hard to see  
8 and that's really not a time to learn to drive. Secondly,  
9 it's a time when all of the crazies are out. And while all  
10 of us are threatened by these crazy people, novice drivers  
11 are really the most vulnerable people that are at risk with  
12 night driving.

13           Finally, it's when most young drivers are most  
14 likely to get into trouble. What we know is that about half  
15 the states that have current graduated driver license laws  
16 imposed and a night driving restriction, and this night  
17 driving restriction is in effect sometime between the hours  
18 of nine and one, in one state, the state that I live in,  
19 Florida, has actually night driving restrictions that work  
20 at three different times, for 15-year-olds, 16-year-olds,  
21 and 17-year-olds. Most states that do have night driving  
22 restrictions do allow for provisions or exceptions that are  
23 associated with work or any type of approved student  
24 activities.

25           What we do know about night driving is

1 that -- night driving restrictions is that they're probably  
2 the most controversial element of graduated driver license.  
3 And typically they are the most resisted before they're  
4 enacted and they're the most warmly accepted after it is  
5 enacted. The tricky part about night driving restrictions  
6 is to pick the right hours because if you start too late  
7 that accomplishes very little because most novice drivers  
8 don't crash in the wee hours of the morning. If you start  
9 too early, then you disrupt legitimate activities that  
10 novice drivers are involved in. And what we know about  
11 night driving restrictions across the country where they  
12 have been implemented is that the hours between ten and  
13 midnight seem to be the acceptable zone.

14           Passenger limitations is another component of  
15 graduated driver licenses that has safety benefits. One of  
16 the things that we know about passengers is that two-thirds  
17 of all passengers -- teen passengers that are killed in  
18 motor vehicle crashes are killed in vehicles driven by  
19 another teen. What most states try to do in terms of  
20 implementing passenger restrictions is to limit the number  
21 of passengers to the number of available seatbelts that are  
22 in a vehicle. That prevents overcrowding and it also makes  
23 belt use consistent with the state belt use laws.

24           What we tried to do there is -- because we know  
25 that teen drivers are the least likely to use belts, is to

1 provide incentives for them to use their belts. So maybe  
2 one way that we could do that is for teen drivers -- to pass  
3 a primary belt use law for teen drivers and make it -- from  
4 an incentive standpoint make it unattractive to get a  
5 violation for not having your seat belt on. Maybe what you  
6 want to do is charge them maybe \$200 for a violation of the  
7 seat belt use law. We really know that mandatory belt use  
8 is very important for teen drivers.

9           Let's talk about improving their ability for a  
10 couple of minutes. First, let's talk about phased  
11 instruction. One of the questions that we seem to get a lot  
12 about in terms of graduated driver license is what's the  
13 value of driver education. We know that driver education  
14 does have value, that the studies that have been done on  
15 driver education has shown that driver education is  
16 effective on a short-term basis in terms of reducing crashes  
17 and violations. And remember what I said at the beginning  
18 of my testimony that the first year of driving is the most  
19 important year of a person's driving career. What we think  
20 is important about education is is that you have to realize  
21 that one dose of education of instruction has very limited  
22 value no matter what activity that you're involved in,  
23 whether you're playing basketball, football, or any type of  
24 sport.

25           And what we try to do with driver education is

1 to give kids -- make them safe drivers by providing them 30  
2 hours of classroom and six hours of behind-the-wheel  
3 training. And what we know is is that meager amount of  
4 behind-the-wheel training doesn't last a long time and it  
5 doesn't last over a lifetime of safe driving.

6           What we think is really important from a  
7 learning standpoint is that you have phased instruction,  
8 that you have both a basic driver education course as well  
9 as an advanced driver education course, that you spread out  
10 the learning, that you not try to give all of this  
11 instruction about safe driving in one additional shot.

12           One of the things that we also know about driver  
13 education is that from the studies is that we have an  
14 unrealistic expectation as a society about what the value of  
15 driver education is. What we really know is that driver  
16 education has the capacity to reduce the number of crashes  
17 about 2 percent. As safety professionals we always thought  
18 it would be 10 or 15 percent.

19           So driver education does have value. What we  
20 think should happen is that you spread it out, have it in  
21 two phases rather than trying to give it all at one time.

22           And we think that along with spreading out  
23 driver education, you need to spread out the testing, that  
24 you should also have phased testing, that you test people in  
25 various phases and that you make the test meaningful test.

1 When do you that, what happens is that people prepare for  
2 the test in a different way. If you make the road test a  
3 meaningful road test, then people will prepare to pass that  
4 road test.

5           One of the things that we know is effective  
6 from -- that the research shows is effective is that once a  
7 person takes the test and they fail the test that there's a  
8 certain period of time that they must pass that they must go  
9 through before they're allowed to take the test again. So  
10 if a person fails the driver test, they shouldn't be allowed  
11 to come back the next day or the next week to try to take it  
12 and pass it again, that they spend some more time preparing  
13 for that test.

14           Let's talk about parent involvement for a  
15 minute. What we know about driving is that the six hours  
16 that most kids get behind the wheel is not enough  
17 behind-the-wheel experience to make them good, safe  
18 drivers. And parents frankly are just too good of a  
19 resource to pass up.

20           One of the questions that you asked earlier  
21 related to whether or not high schools are in the best  
22 position to provide additional or mandated driver  
23 education. What we know about most graduated driver license  
24 systems in this country is that from a parent involvement  
25 standpoint they require -- Michigan requires 50 hours of

1 parent involvement, California 50 hours, Illinois 25 hours.  
2 What we know is that parents are in the best position to  
3 provide the additional behind-the-wheel practice time that  
4 teens need. They are too valuable a resource to give up.

5           And lastly we're going to talk -- I want to talk  
6 a little bit about enhancing motivation in three ways.  
7 First through early intervention. I think Representative  
8 Vance asked the question about young people who get traffic  
9 violations. In many states that have graduated driver  
10 license, early intervention is a reality with the first  
11 traffic violation. In most states that have graduated  
12 driver license, early intervention is definitely a factor  
13 after two violations. So early intervention is a very  
14 important part.

15           We talked about conditional advancement, in  
16 other words, that there must be a period both in the  
17 learner's stage as well as in the intermediate phase where  
18 young people must drive collision and crash free before they  
19 can progress to another stage. Very important from a safety  
20 standpoint that this be a part of any graduated driver  
21 license plan. It actually motivates young people to take  
22 the responsibility to drive within the law and drive  
23 safely. So conditional advancement is a very important  
24 part.

25           And if you really wanted to do something else



1 that motivates young people to drive safely, have them  
2 attend -- once they do get these violations, if they do get  
3 them, have them attend violator courses. What we know about  
4 driving is -- from a young person's standpoint is that  
5 they're overrepresented in crashes because of three reasons,  
6 either they lack basic driving skills and knowledge, rules  
7 of the road. That's a very small part or small reason why  
8 they have traffic crashes. One of the major reasons they  
9 have traffic crashes is because they lack safe driving  
10 practices. And another major reason that they're  
11 involved -- overinvolved in traffic crashes is because  
12 they're immature. And if we look at the immaturity part, we  
13 really can't do much to help young people to become mature  
14 drivers. The only thing that we know that really helps them  
15 in that way is by them attending the school of hard knocks.  
16 It's just living life. That's how you became more mature.

17           But there are some things that we can do. If we  
18 have a good, strong graduated driver license law, that helps  
19 to motivate them to be responsible drivers and helps them  
20 gain these safe driving practices, that they need to put in  
21 additional behind-the-wheel time that they need and that's  
22 the value of a graduated driver license program.

23           Driver education is an important component of  
24 the graduated driver licensing program because it is to date  
25 still the best most efficient way that we know of to help

1 young people learn the rules of the road and to help them to  
2 learn basic driving skills.

3           But in order for them to learn safe driving  
4 practices, they have to drive the car. And what we want  
5 them to do and what we see the value in them doing that is  
6 that they drive the vehicle under supervised conditions for  
7 a certain period of time.

8           So those are the three things that we hope to  
9 accomplish if we're going to help young people become safe  
10 drivers. We need to help them to become more mature, we  
11 need to motivate them to be responsible drivers, we need to  
12 help them to gain this additional supervised practice behind  
13 the wheel, and parents are in the best position to give  
14 that. Thank you.

15           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Ted, before you go on, when  
16 we have our session with the staff folks and craft this  
17 piece of legislation, would you be available to sit in for a  
18 little bit of time in our process?

19           MR. BUTLER: Sure. Are you talking today?

20           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: No.

21           MR. BUTLER: Yeah, I would. Yes, I would.

22           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Ted.

23           MR. LEONARD: Good morning, Mr. Chairman,  
24 Members of the Transportation Committee and other members of  
25 the staff. Thank you for convening this forum on this very

1 important topic. It's very appropriate timeliness that the  
2 General Assembly examine our young driver problem. And what  
3 exactly is our young driver problem? Well, it is that our  
4 teen drivers are killing themselves and others in traffic  
5 accidents at an epidemic rate.

6           Nearly every legislator in the General Assembly  
7 is probably aware of a teen driver in their district who has  
8 been involved in a traffic accident which has either caused  
9 death or serious injury. Car crashes, as we've heard  
10 earlier, are the number one cause of death for 15- to  
11 20-year-olds, and I won't go into a lot of statistics and  
12 provide that with the written testimony. But one of the  
13 things that jumped out at me was the statistic that 45  
14 percent of all 16- and 17-year-old girls that die do so in  
15 an automobile accident. And for boys that rate is 36  
16 percent of deaths in crashes.

17           Why are these problems occurring and why do we  
18 have this high rate of young driver crashes? First of all,  
19 as Charles touched on, inexperience. Novice drivers simply  
20 lack the real world skills to drive in road conditions and  
21 environments. Young drivers typically are involved in  
22 single-car run-off-the-road crashes and hit fixed objects  
23 such as trees, embankments and other stopped cars. They  
24 also exhibit high-risk behavior which means that the  
25 immaturity and impulsiveness leading to poor driving

1 judgment often causes the accidents such as traveling too  
2 fast for conditions.

3           And these behaviors are particularly evident  
4 when there's a number of teen passengers accompanying the  
5 teen driver. Some studies have shown that allowing  
6 passengers to ride with 16-year-old drivers increases the  
7 chances of a fatal crash by 100 percent. When you have more  
8 teens in a car with a teen driver, you have added  
9 distractions, you have peer pressure, you have encouragement  
10 to drive unsafely. And also a lack of seat belt use is  
11 evident in teen crashes as is the use of alcohol in a  
12 significant number of teen crashes.

13           Novice drivers also exhibit -- also have  
14 high-risk exposure, they drive during nighttime hours, often  
15 again with other young passengers. The risk of fatal  
16 crashes to teenagers is highest between 9:00 p.m. and  
17 6:00 a.m. Fifty-five percent of all fatal teen crashes  
18 occur between 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

19           The American Automobile Association is  
20 advocating a program of graduated driver licensing which  
21 includes several key components. And one was touched on  
22 earlier today, again a minimum of six months in stages one  
23 and two, nighttime driving restrictions, teen passenger  
24 restrictions. Two-thirds, as I said, of all teen passenger  
25 deaths occur in crashes in which another teen is driving.

1 Mandatory use of seat belts through and including standard  
2 enforcement for teens, increased behind-the-wheel driving  
3 experience that the AAA program advocates, 100 total parent  
4 instructor certified hours, 50 hours in each stage one and  
5 two, and a successful completion of a road and written test  
6 in each stage.

7           Are graduated licensing programs effective? In  
8 the several states which have implemented the graduated  
9 driving programs, California has reported a 5 percent  
10 reduction in crashes for drivers ages 15 to 17. Maryland  
11 reported a 5 percent reduction in crashes and a 10 percent  
12 reduction in traffic convictions for drivers age 16 and 17.  
13 And Oregon reported a 16 percent reduction in crashes for  
14 male drivers 16 and 17. And other countries such a New  
15 Zealand and Canada have also seen success in their  
16 implemented graduated driver programs. The states of  
17 Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina and  
18 Ohio have implemented full graduated driver programs.

19           I'd like to thank the committee for this  
20 opportunity to present our views and say that we are willing  
21 to work in any way with legislators to craft legislation to  
22 address the problem of teen driving. We cannot afford to  
23 lose any more teen lives.

24           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much.  
25 Questions to the right? On the left?

1                   REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: I asked a question  
2 before of the witnesses. Do you advocate raising the age  
3 from 16 to say 17 or 18 here in Pennsylvania?

4                   MR. LEONARD: When you get into 17- and  
5 18-year-olds, you now have kids who are juniors, seniors in  
6 high school, and 17 some are going off to college. So in  
7 that context it may be very difficult. We would certainly  
8 not advocate lowering. Some states have gone to 15, 15 and  
9 a half and some 14. We prefer to stay with 16 as the  
10 beginning age.

11                   REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Do you know many states  
12 approximately have 17?

13                   MR. BUTLER: States nearby, New York has a 17 in  
14 certain parts of New York as well as I believe New Jersey  
15 and Connecticut. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety  
16 has produced studies that show that states who license  
17 drivers -- young drivers at 17 have a lower crash rate than  
18 states that license them at earlier ages. So there are  
19 research studies that document that. The point is that at  
20 no matter what age you start driving, novices are at higher  
21 risk of being involved in crashes than people who have  
22 experience. And a novice is a novice is a novice no matter  
23 what age you start driving. People who don't have  
24 experience are at higher risk than people who do.

25                   REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Thank you.

1 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Paul.

2 MR. PARSELLS: I do have one question. You  
3 talked about hours of supervised driving by parents in  
4 certain states currently. How is that monitored?

5 MR. BUTLER: It's implemented or monitored on  
6 the honor system, that parents have to attest that they have  
7 driven 50 hours with their young driver. A lot of times  
8 what we communicate to people is that will parents cheat.  
9 Yes, parents will cheat. We know that. What we try to get  
10 them to see is that actually who are you cheating. You're  
11 really cheating your own son or daughter because what young  
12 people need most to prevent them from being involved in  
13 traffic crashes is as much supervised behind-the-wheel  
14 driving experience that you can give them. That's the  
15 greatest thing we can give kids to help them to transition  
16 through what is most clearly the most dangerous period of  
17 their lives.

18 MR. PARSELLS: Thank you.

19 MR. BUTLER: We also provide a lot of materials  
20 and aids that can help the parent to audit or to record  
21 their night driving contracts, there are all kinds of  
22 contracts, driving logs that help the parent to log in the  
23 amount of time that they spend. So there are a lot of  
24 materials out there to help parents to do this.

25 And I think that's one of the things that

1 parents really are asking for. There are a lot of parents  
2 who are willing to spend the time if they just have some  
3 help in terms of showing them what to do in terms of helping  
4 to provide the supervised practice. But there are a lot of  
5 materials out there.

6 MR. PARSELLS: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. Our  
8 next panel is Arthur J. Glatfelter, a writer. He wrote an  
9 excellent book. Everyone should read it. He started out in  
10 the insurance business. Along with him is Vincent Phillips,  
11 Director of Government Affairs for the Independent Insurance  
12 Agents.

13 MR. PHILLIPS: Mr. Chairman, and Members of the  
14 Committee, particularly Pat Vance, my state representative,  
15 thank you very much for affording us this opportunity to  
16 testify. As mentioned before, I am Vince Phillips, Vice  
17 President of Government Affairs for the Independent  
18 Insurance Agents of Pennsylvania, and we're a trade  
19 association which represents about a thousand property  
20 casualty insurance agencies throughout the Commonwealth.

21 My role this morning, and indeed my honor, is to  
22 introduce one of my members to you. Arthur Glatfelter is  
23 known as someone with a great deal of vision as well as  
24 insurance expertise. In the early 1990s, for example, he  
25 recognized that the old workers compensation system was in



1 danger of self-destructing because of the hemorrhaging in  
2 medical expenses, and it was his leadership, working in a  
3 bipartisan way with the leadership and many others,  
4 including some here today, that led to the passage of  
5 Act 44.

6           He's also had a similar vision when it comes to  
7 highway safety. And he was a leader, volunteer spokesperson  
8 if you will, for the need to address Pennsylvania's decaying  
9 infrastructure, and indeed he called for graduated drivers  
10 licensing years before the context of this current  
11 discussion.

12           So it's not just a tactical concern that he's  
13 here today, but also, at least in our view, he's a person of  
14 vision, someone who understands the issue has finally  
15 reached its time. And so I present to you with no further  
16 adieu Arthur Glatfelter.

17           MR. GLADFELTER: Thank you very much. I'm  
18 pleased to be here. If you ask me questions, please speak  
19 as loud as you can. My expensive hearing aids haven't done  
20 me much good in this room so I missed most of what was said  
21 before.

22           I am the chairman of the board and CEO of the  
23 Glatfelter Insurance Group in York, and I have been a  
24 licensed insurance agent of all lines since November of  
25 1947, having completed 50 years in this field last

1 November. And I am here to represent the Independent Agents  
2 Association.

3           In 1951 I opened my own agency and will  
4 celebrate 50 years of active service in the agency in the  
5 year 2001 and I am proud to tell you it has grown to be one  
6 of the largest privately-owned agencies in the country. I  
7 have been a licensed vehicle operator since 1940, 48 years,  
8 with approximately 250 hours driving experience from the  
9 ages of 12 to 16 which I will explain. I grew up next door  
10 to my father's small automobile agency in Loganville, York  
11 County, where I had many opportunities to practice in the  
12 used car lot behind the garage as well as some of the many  
13 gravel roads we had in those days. I drove everything from  
14 a Model-T Ford, which the only accident I think I ever had I  
15 drove it through my father's dog pen and he was very  
16 unhappy. I also have driven everything up to a tow truck.  
17 And as a matter of fact, when I was 15 the state police have  
18 gotten me out of bed several times to tow cars in.

19           During the 1970s and 80s I traveled extensively  
20 throughout Pennsylvania visiting fire departments, averaging  
21 50,000 miles a year, and I'm still driving in excess of  
22 25,000 miles a year. I am pleased to tell you also that I  
23 have never received a speeding ticket in a radar trap and I  
24 have never been involved in an accident on the highway.

25           I felt it somewhat important to present this

1 brief background only to give you some indication of my  
2 qualifications to speak on the subject at hand.

3           I am appalled to read regularly in our  
4 newspapers of the number of very young drivers who lose  
5 their lives in automobile accidents, and many of them not  
6 drivers, but passengers. I am also outraged to witness the  
7 driving skills and habits displayed on our roadways today by  
8 a vast majority of operators of all ages and both sexes.  
9 There is no question in my mind that less than 10 percent of  
10 all operators ever stop at stop signs, observe yield signs  
11 as they should or -- observe yield signs as they should and  
12 seem to see amber lights as a challenge to beat the red  
13 light.

14           I am grateful for this opportunity because I  
15 truly care about young people. I believe they are taking a  
16 bum rap from law enforcement personnel as well as the  
17 press. Throughout the history of the world each generation  
18 has gained knowledge and habits from previous generations.  
19 That certainly also is true today. Young people quite  
20 naturally learn from observing their parents and other older  
21 people. They form habits, some good and some bad, from  
22 their parents.

23           Picture if you will young children in an  
24 automobile for 16 years watching their parents open the car  
25 window to deposit a beer or a soda can or fast food bag of

1 garbage along the highway, habitually disregarding stop  
2 signs, view yield signs as an invitation to enter the  
3 highway rather than a warning of the responsibility to enter  
4 a highway in a safe manner or accelerating at the sight of  
5 an amber light to beat the red light rather than as a  
6 warning to prepare to stop before the light turns red,  
7 turning on the left or right turn signal on an interstate  
8 relating it as a command light to notify other operators to  
9 clear the way. How could we possibly expect new 16-year-old  
10 operators to do anything but what they have been taught for  
11 16 years?

12           If we are going to reduce the number of vehicle  
13 fatalities of our young people, we must begin to work with  
14 them much earlier than the day they reach age 16 and receive  
15 a learner's permit.

16           I recently asked a superintendent of schools  
17 what he would like to see in the education system to make  
18 his -- give him a better success ratio. He said get the  
19 children earlier. I think that's what we have to do here.  
20 If we hope to change the attitude and driving habits of  
21 people on our high-speed, crowded roadways, we need to start  
22 in elementary school for in my opinion the greatest change  
23 in our society during my 73 years is the almost total lack  
24 of common courtesy in our society. And nowhere is courtesy  
25 more important than already overcrowded highways. We must

1 fill the minds of young people with proper driving habits  
2 and skills, but if they do not already understand and  
3 practice common courtesy in everyday situations, obviously  
4 they cannot be expected to do so behind the wheel of an  
5 automobile.

6           In fact it is tough enough for a youthful  
7 operator to be given a license at age 16 and put him or her  
8 in an automobile that will reach 65 or 70 miles an hour in  
9 seconds after watching all the high-speed chases on TV night  
10 after night and not feel compelled to try it themselves.

11           I can tell you that someone -- in my 50 years of  
12 experience in the insurance business whether someone gets a  
13 license at 16, 26 or 36, the first year is absolutely  
14 crucial. We certainly were no different in our youth, but  
15 in my youth we did not have TV, nor did we have automobiles  
16 that would reach those high speeds in seconds. Neither did  
17 we have the number of vehicles or the high-speed,  
18 overcrowded highways.

19           Placing more police on our highways will not  
20 correct this problem. We could not afford the number  
21 required to police all the secondary roads where the vast  
22 majority of these youthful drivers and passengers are  
23 killed. Even if we could, these young people are too  
24 intelligent and learn many ways to avoid the areas covered  
25 by police patrols on a regular basis.

1 I have done extensive research for more than 15  
2 years to write a book on highways and highway safety. In  
3 doing so I reviewed nine years of PennDOT records which  
4 revealed much information. Also it lacks information that  
5 would be very helpful in analyzing the youthful driver  
6 problems. Allow me to share some of this information.

7 In the nine years from 1985 through 1993, there  
8 were 15,935 fatalities on Pennsylvania highways averaging  
9 1771 fatalities per year. 74.6 percent or 11,891 occurred  
10 on state highways -- interstates and turnpikes not  
11 included. 7.5 percent, 1177, occurred on interstates and  
12 the turnpike. 7.5 percent on interstates. 18 percent,  
13 2867, on municipal, county or private roads. 23.4 percent,  
14 3721, occurred between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and  
15 2:59 a.m., a four-hour period. 31 percent, 4960, between  
16 11:00 p.m. and 5:59 a.m., a period of seven hours. 18.8  
17 percent or 3,000 occurred at traffic signals, stop signs and  
18 yield signs, and we called them accidents. Very, very few  
19 of them were accidents. They were really planned events  
20 like playing Russian roulette. It was not a matter if they  
21 were going to happen, but when.

22 Unfortunately reports of PennDOT do not tell us  
23 the ages of the operators in these fatal accidents occurring  
24 in the 11:00 p.m. to 2:59 a.m. period. I'm sure they have  
25 those records, but they do not tell us the ages of the

1 operators at the time of the accident, the number of the  
2 occupants in the car, the kind of roadway on which the  
3 accident occurred, whether it was a one-vehicle or a  
4 multiple-vehicle accident or the day of the week or weather  
5 conditions, among other important factors.

6           You are probably aware that the fatality rate  
7 for young male operators, which totaled 5635 or 35.4 percent  
8 of the 15,935 fatalities during the nine-year period, shows  
9 a decline in recent years. I could show you a chart there  
10 but will tell you this, because if you read a lot of  
11 accounts in the newspaper you would believe that's because  
12 of the alcohol checkpoints and police patrols. But I tell  
13 you my opinion is that it's the result of the economy. I  
14 don't think that the young men have the funds to pay three  
15 or \$4,000 for insurance and buy these high-speed cars. I  
16 don't see young men on the road anymore like I did when I  
17 first started in the insurance business.

18           I've added a tenth year in there so you see that  
19 there's an average of 609 young people killed a year but  
20 coming down from 850 in 1986 to 461 in 1994. We read in  
21 here much about speed on our limited-access highways, but I  
22 submit to you that while speed certainly has a great effect  
23 on the severity of an accident, it does not cause accidents.  
24 If every vehicle traveling on a limited-access highway were  
25 traveling at 70 miles per hour and maintained a safe

1 distance between them and the vehicle they were following,  
2 how would an accident occur without somebody doing something  
3 stupid? For example, turning on a left or right turn signal  
4 feeling fully protected and then making a knee-jerk move and  
5 fly out in front of an 18-wheeler. Start down an entrance  
6 ramp with a left turn signal flashing believing all vehicles  
7 on the roadway must yield to them. In neither case would  
8 speed be the cause of the accident, but it surely would be  
9 flirting with death.

10           I have asked probably in excess of a hundred  
11 long-haul truck drivers for their opinion of the major cause  
12 of accidents on limited-access highways. Almost without  
13 exception they would quickly respond with the words falling  
14 asleep. Oddly enough in the 15,936 fatalities in the  
15 years '85 to '93, PennDOT reports that as a contributing  
16 factor drowsy, sleep, fatigue, to be 250 of the 15,935  
17 fatalities. If the facts were known I strongly believe the  
18 number would more like ten times that shown in the police  
19 reports.

20           What can we do that might reduce the rate of  
21 fatalities among our young operators and passengers? I see  
22 no way we can have a meaningful effect on these fatalities  
23 except education and graduated licensing. Young people are  
24 no different today than they were in my generation. Surely  
25 you would agree that conditions are very much different. We



1 must begin in our schools in the elementary grades to teach  
2 these young people the social graces that were much more  
3 prevalent in previous generations.

4           I can recall as a child seeing trucks going up  
5 the hill at five or ten miles an hour with the driver  
6 standing on the running board and when he got to the top of  
7 the hill waving people around. If somebody did that today,  
8 they would think he was out of his mind. But we do not have  
9 courtesy on the roads anymore.

10           I do not believe it necessary to outline the  
11 social graces that would make our society a better place to  
12 live, but the practice of simple common courtesy would be a  
13 wonderful start and I think reduce the accident rate  
14 fantastically.

15           Attached is what I believe should be  
16 incorporated in a graduated driver licensing program. I  
17 will not go through it, but I would like to just touch on  
18 phase one. I have for a long time -- I mentioned earlier  
19 that I started driving when I was 11 or 12 and I did. What  
20 we have to do is get these people some opportunity to learn  
21 to operate a car properly before they are given a license  
22 at 16. I don't know how anyone could get a license and in  
23 30 days consider himself to be a driver or any one of us  
24 older people should think that they should. But if they did  
25 what I would like to see and have been talking about for

1 years, and that is every county to put in a facility on some  
2 playground a driver training course that they could go there  
3 with an adult driver over 21 and that's the only place they  
4 could drive with one exception. I think in every county we  
5 ought to have some real country roads set aside, marked  
6 clearly with signs that say driver training facility from  
7 noon on Sunday till dusk and do that year round.

8 I assure you that the day I took my driver's  
9 test, which is the day I got my learner's permit, I would  
10 comport that with after a couple of weeks of learning how to  
11 drive a bicycle, which the first few weeks I had trouble and  
12 after a couple months I was doing wheelies and everything.

13 So we've got to be kind to these young people  
14 and give them a better opportunity. I don't think we can  
15 expect them to do much better if we put them in these  
16 high-speed vehicles with very little driving. And driver  
17 training I would back a hundred percent if it had a lot more  
18 actual driving experience involved in it.

19 I thank you very much, and I'd be happy to  
20 answer any questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. I'd  
22 like to also ask you when our staff -- professional staff  
23 gets right into this legislation I would appreciate it if  
24 you would make yourself available. Questions for the panel.

25 MR. GALT FELTER: I would be very happy to.

1 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I'd like to also introduce  
2 on my left, I think it's significant on my left,  
3 Representative Todd Platts. Any questions. Representative  
4 Nickol.

5 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Mr. Glatfelter, I  
6 understand that you advocate in your testimony delaying the  
7 granting of full license at 18 unless a person's been  
8 accident free for one year. Is my understanding correct?

9 MR. GLATFELTER: Yes.

10 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: As you heard the  
11 department testify earlier --

12 MR. GLATFELTER: No, I didn't. I'm sorry. I  
13 was here, but I didn't hear.

14 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: I had asked this  
15 question and they indicated that they feel that at 18 you  
16 reach the age of majority and you should be treated as any  
17 other full adult by using the point system. My feelings  
18 tend to be more akin with yours, that we shouldn't grant  
19 full license until someone has earned it. Are you aware of  
20 any others -- do any other states delay the granting of a  
21 full license until someone evidences one year of good  
22 driving that you're aware?

23 MR. GLATFELTER: Yes. Yes, I am.

24 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: You say there other  
25 states that do?

1 MR. GLATFELTER: I'm sorry.

2 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Are there other states  
3 that require one year of good driving, no accidents, before  
4 they grant a full license?

5 MR. GLATFELTER: Yes. And I have the book in my  
6 briefcase and it has all the states listed. Yes.

7 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I'd also like to introduce  
9 to my right Jere Strittmatter and Representative Dennis  
10 Leh. They came in earlier. Thank you very much.

11 On our next panel, Allen Robinson, Ph.D., CEO of  
12 the American Driver and Traffic Safety Education  
13 Association, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Richard  
14 Hornfeck, Ph.D., Director of the Highway Safety Center,  
15 Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

16 DR. ROBINSON: Thank you, Chairman Geist,  
17 Representative Vance, and Members of the House  
18 Transportation Committee, for bringing us together today to  
19 talk about a very serious issue.

20 As I was introduced, I am the CEO of the  
21 American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association and  
22 I'm also a professor in the Highway Safety Center. ADTSEA  
23 represents professional traffic safety people throughout the  
24 United States.

25 In addition to my comments today, I have some

1 handouts from the National Highway Traffic Safety  
2 Administration in regards to their proposed guidelines for  
3 driver graduated licensing. I have an article out of the  
4 Washington Post that describes the recently signed graduated  
5 driver licensing bill in the State of Maryland, and in  
6 Maryland regardless of age you must have education and  
7 training prior to licensing and regardless of age you must  
8 have at least one year of experience of safe driving  
9 accident violation free prior to getting a license. And  
10 that's a significant difference amongst the states. And I  
11 have a handout from the American Association of Motor  
12 Vehicle Administrators that describes what graduated driver  
13 licensing should be.

14 I'll take your advice and paraphrase my  
15 testimony. Graduated driver licensing, the time has come.  
16 We have to train people if we expect them to safely and  
17 properly use cars and our transportation system. Do you  
18 know that we lose more police officers in this state in  
19 crashes of cars than we do with guns and violence? Do you  
20 know that we have more workmen compensation claims in this  
21 state due to car crashes than any other factor? Is it  
22 surprising then that our young people ages 15 to 20 are  
23 overly represented in traffic crashes because they have not  
24 been trained.

25 You suggest waiting till age 18 to license

1 somebody when two-thirds of our teenagers die as  
2 passengers. We must teach them passenger safety as well as  
3 driver education. If we ignore our responsibilities as  
4 state legislators, as government officials, as safety  
5 associations, why should the teenagers care? It's just a  
6 car, everybody drives it, it's simple. Would Ford Motor  
7 Company hire their chief accountant who had one course in  
8 accounting? I don't think so. Yet we put people out on the  
9 highways with less than one course.

10 I believe it is essential that we have quality  
11 driver education with good curriculums as described by Dave  
12 Secrist here today, that we monitor those students as they  
13 progress through the licensing system for full licensure and  
14 that we insist that our teachers be quality teachers  
15 offering good programs. If we do that, as Dave  
16 suggested -- I mean Charles did, we think we can get a 2  
17 percent reduction in crashes, injuries and fatalities. When  
18 550,000 teenagers are in crashes that occur each year, if we  
19 could reduce that by 2 percent, it would be substantial. We  
20 don't have to continue the carnage on our highways when we  
21 have available to us programs that will work.

22 And I do encourage you to introduce and seek the  
23 passage of legislation that will make a difference for our  
24 young people. Thank you.

25 DR. HORNFECK: What Al had talked about and

1 mentioned are things that are occurring throughout the  
2 country and other states. What I've decided to bring before  
3 the committee this morning is information from  
4 Pennsylvania.

5           Now Dave did mention the enhanced driver  
6 education curriculum. We have been involved with that since  
7 1993. The data that you have in the report that I've given  
8 you is reflective of 24 high school driver education  
9 programs, both with a treatment group, and that was a group  
10 in which implemented the enhanced curriculum, and the  
11 control group were schools that had a state-approved program  
12 and were participating in this study. Without these people  
13 we would not have gotten the data, received the data that we  
14 have here.

15           There were 24 programs which represented  
16 approximately 1800 parents that responded and 1800 students  
17 that responded. And these were self-reporting surveys that  
18 the students and parents did.

19           The results that I have listed in the program  
20 itself in that report will I think show the emphasis or the  
21 need for graduated driver licensing in four areas that I've  
22 presented here. One is a longer time on the permit which  
23 has been mentioned by everybody that has spoken so far this  
24 morning. Secondly is more supervised practice time given by  
25 the parents which has also been emphasized. Thirdly, and

1 I've heard it to some degree but we really need to look at  
2 it and look at it very strongly, is a stronger control on  
3 the individual when they are on that restricted license or  
4 in Pennsylvania we call it a junior license. And fourthly  
5 is a comprehensive driver education program, and there's  
6 some information which is shared with you in this report.

7           To answer the first question do students or  
8 young drivers need a longer time on the learner's permit  
9 before being licensed, my response to that is a resounding,  
10 yes, they do. Twenty-six percent of our young drivers in  
11 our survey received their driver's license within one month  
12 of receiving their permit. Approximately 26 percent  
13 received their driver's license within two months, another  
14 25 percent within three months and then 23 percent after  
15 three months. So you can see it's a approximately a quarter  
16 a quarter, et cetera.

17           Approximately 76 percent of our young drivers in  
18 our study passed their driver's test on the first attempt or  
19 first try. These students that are reflected in this report  
20 are students that were not -- we did not have the end of  
21 skill -- end of course skill test implemented at that time  
22 so these students are representative of the license exam  
23 centers in the state.

24           Approximately 8 percent of our young drivers had  
25 their first collision within the first two months. Now,



1 please remember, these are all collisions, whether they were  
2 reported to the Department of Transportation or not  
3 reported. And I want to emphasize something here because  
4 the first six months you will see that the percentage of the  
5 young drivers that had a collision was extremely high. In  
6 the first two months, 8 percent. In the next two months, 5  
7 percent. In the following two months, 6 percent. After six  
8 months their crashes dropped down to approximately 2 to 3  
9 percent every month. That's a significant drop when we're  
10 looking at young drivers.

11                   Fourthly, approximately 29 percent of our young  
12 drivers indicated they had one or more collisions within  
13 their first six months of acquiring a driver's license.  
14 Sixty-one percent indicated that they were at fault in  
15 relation to that initial crash. And the predominant driving  
16 errors that they told us were misjudging space, speed too  
17 fast for conditions and did not see the other user. They  
18 were the most predominant of the causes in regards to what  
19 they felt was the reason for their crash.

20                   Approximately 23 percent of the parents  
21 indicated that young drivers should be required to have four  
22 more months on the learner's permit. Thirty-three percent  
23 said three months, 30 percent indicated two months, and  
24 there were a small group of parents, approximately 14  
25 percent, that indicated one month was sufficient.

1           So besides looking at our students, our young  
2 drivers, we will also have to -- if we're going to increase  
3 the time on that permit, we will also have to make the  
4 parents aware of why, what the reason is.

5           Do parents and guardians need to provide a  
6 designated amount of supervised practice time for the new  
7 driver? And once again the answer to this is yes. And I  
8 want to emphasize again this is what the parents gave us in  
9 the surveys that they returned to us. Sixteen percent of  
10 the parents provided six or fewer hours of practice driving  
11 to their new drivers, 34 percent provided between 7 and 18  
12 hours, 26 percent provided between 19 and 30 hours. And 25  
13 percent provided in excess of 30 hours. And plus, as  
14 indicated earlier, the number of collisions that the drivers  
15 experienced in the first six months of driving and the  
16 errors that resulted in these collisions were identified.

17           Do young drivers need greater control after  
18 receiving their driver's license? Once again the answer to  
19 this is yes. Fifty-two percent of our young drivers  
20 indicated that the car that they drive or the vehicle that  
21 they drive is their own. Okay. That shocked me when I was  
22 looking through the data. My wife asked me what was wrong.  
23 I said this is hard to believe. But when you talk to the  
24 teachers and you go out to the parking lot and you look at  
25 the newer cars, the sportier cars, they don't belong to the

1 teachers, they belong to the students.

2           Approximately 62 percent of young drivers drive  
3 almost daily to and from school. We have a big school bus  
4 program in the state, but in our group the students that  
5 responded, 62 percent of them said that they drive almost  
6 daily. Approximately 52 percent of our young drivers  
7 indicated that they do the majority of their driving with  
8 friends, 39 percent indicated alone, and guess where the  
9 parents were at -- 4 percent. So when they get their  
10 license they're driving by themselves or with friends in  
11 their own vehicle. Are they a high-risk group? Yes, they  
12 are.

13           Fourteen percent of the young drivers indicated  
14 that they had been cited for a moving violation in their  
15 first six months of licensing. If we are going to have  
16 stronger controls on the young driver on that restricted  
17 license, we must have enforcement. We had a meeting in  
18 Harrisburg on Friday at the Department of Education. We had  
19 ten school districts represented. We talked about the zero  
20 tolerance law. We talked about a mandatory safety belt  
21 law. These were some of the things that were brought up in  
22 discussion in regards to our enhanced curriculum meeting.

23           And the teachers -- the majority of the teachers  
24 indicated that so what, because the students are coming back  
25 and saying that they can speed, they can drink alcohol and

1 drive because they're not being caught, and if they are  
2 being caught, they are only being reprimanded. That was  
3 voiced to me by the teachers. I was shocked as well as Dave  
4 Secrist was shocked to hear that. That is not true in all  
5 areas. But that was true with some of the teachers in the  
6 areas that they were representing.

7           Approximately 89 percent of our young drivers in  
8 the first six months indicated that they wore they safety  
9 belts as a driver. But when they moved over to the  
10 passenger's seat it dropped to approximately 80 percent, and  
11 then when they move to the back seat it dropped to 50  
12 percent.

13           Do drivers need formal driver education? Yes.  
14 The answer is a resounding yes because in 1995, and this is  
15 the data that I used, the 16- and 17-year-old drivers in  
16 Pennsylvania were involved in 14,068 reported collisions.  
17 This is for 16 and 17. And the reason I grouped them  
18 because when students complete a state approved program they  
19 are predominantly 17 years of age, not 16. But I needed to  
20 group the two of them together. This was a crash rate of  
21 11.7 crashes for every 100 licensed 16 and 17-year-olds.

22           During 1995 the 16 and 17-year-olds that  
23 completed the self-reporting survey in which they identified  
24 that they had -- were involved in a reported crash, their  
25 collision rate for that group was 7.03. Now, please

1 remember that this was both the treatment group and control  
2 group. We had strong driver education programs in both  
3 groups, and I wanted to combine both of them. This is 4.5  
4 fewer collisions than the 16 or 17-year-olds that are in the  
5 files for 1995 which had a collision rate of 11.69 and our  
6 group showed 7.03. So to me that says that driver education  
7 programs in schools where the programs were being supported  
8 and they were comprehensive were doing a fairly good job of  
9 training the young driver. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. It  
11 seems that we spend so much money on school busing, if we  
12 can get the them to carpool, we can really cut down on the  
13 cost of busing and give the money to the superintendents to  
14 develop a good program of driver's ed.

15 DR. HORNFECK: It might work like that.

16 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: When we meet with our  
17 professional staff to draft a very comprehensive bill, if  
18 you would meet with our staff, we would appreciate that.

19 DR. HORNFECK: We would appreciate that effort,  
20 yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I think we need to add today  
22 this is the third indication that the time has come. Your  
23 stats, they are almost imputable about what's needed. It's  
24 time for us, the Legislature, to respond with something.  
25 We're going to do that which will allow these young folks to

1 drive and at the same time be responsible. I think that's  
2 all we can do. Questions on the right. Jere.

3 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: I wanted to just  
4 question you in regard to -- all your vast experience, both  
5 of you are doctors, on better preparing our students. I  
6 believe that we know that at 16 I think that it's the time  
7 to get good behavior, and it might be antidotal what I've  
8 seen, but is it true that you can substantiate that students  
9 who do practice when they're younger, like one of our  
10 previous testifiers, Mr. Glatfelter, was saying he was  
11 driving cars when he was 12 to 16 on a used car lot, tow  
12 trucks -- it's antidotal but I just wondered if you can  
13 substantiate what I've seen different students who were used  
14 to driving electric carts in mobile home parks, campgrounds,  
15 golf courses, or go carts, do they seem to be safer drivers,  
16 that they have had practice and they learned at a safer  
17 speed? Do you think that that's antidotal what I've seen or  
18 can you substantiate that there is something to that that  
19 students who practice with electric carts, go carts at  
20 slower speeds are actually safer drivers?

21 DR. HORNFECK: I'm going to let Allen respond to  
22 that and then I'm going to come back with just one short  
23 comment.

24 DR. ROBINSON: I don't think there's any  
25 relationship at all. One of the things that we know is we

1 can teach basic driving skills very effectively in young  
2 people. What we had difficulty in teaching is safe driving  
3 practices such as gap selection. They accept such high  
4 risks. We have to get them to reassess their risk  
5 acceptance, and we have to improve their decision making so  
6 that they know that something could happen, and if they  
7 don't take an action to reduce it, it's going to be serious.

8 All young people mature differently. There's no  
9 doubt about that. And certainly those mature individuals as  
10 they come into our programs are easier to teach. And that's  
11 why we need to spread out the learning time from frequently  
12 a few days to a couple of years so we can increase that  
13 maturity as well as that experience as they're driving.

14 So specifically we need to provide them with  
15 what we want them to do, show them the consequences if they  
16 don't do it properly, and guide them through those hormone  
17 years that you were talking about. These kids are great and  
18 they accept great chances and we've got to reduce those  
19 risks that they accept and make them wiser.

20 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: When I see people  
21 come from other countries, for instance, they're very  
22 mature, but they haven't had the practice of driving. So I  
23 think your answer to me was, well, is it because of the  
24 hormones or because of the maturity. I think lack of  
25 practice. Whether you're practicing for 12 or whether 42 if

1 you practice at lower speeds with electric carts or  
2 whatever, you don't think there's any --

3 DR. ROBINSON: Well, I just didn't think the  
4 electric carts would have much of an impact. But you're  
5 absolutely correct, six hours of driver education is so  
6 inadequate that we shouldn't even begin to measure it. And  
7 that's why we believe in the 50 hours of driving practice  
8 with parents. That's why we want an intermediate license so  
9 they go out and prove themselves, they drive six months  
10 crash-free, violation-free, then have segment two driver  
11 education so that we can deal with decision making and risk  
12 awareness. Drive another six months accident-free,  
13 violation-free, and then take a test that is a meaningful  
14 test before they get a full license.

15 I think motorcycle education is a great  
16 prerequisite for driver education. But I wouldn't want to  
17 tell everybody they have to learn to ride a motorcycle  
18 before they get a car because I'd get shot. So I do believe  
19 that there are a variety of ways to gain experience before  
20 they get into this congested traffic of heavy city driving.  
21 I would agree with that.

22 DR. HORNFECK: One of the components in our  
23 enhanced driver education curriculum is a decision making  
24 model. And we found that we have a lot of success with the  
25 high school student, the 15 and 16-year-old, when they were



1 going through this curriculum. We did a poststudy with  
2 seniors at some selected schools that had participated in  
3 the first year, and the seniors still remembered the models,  
4 were still able to apply it. We felt good about that.

5           We just started this year this past spring with  
6 the support of the Department of Education and the  
7 Department of Transportation to implement a predriver  
8 education curriculum starting in grades four and going  
9 through grade eight, and it's called Caring Children, Caring  
10 Choices. Right now we have it in place in four school  
11 districts in Pennsylvania -- actually six school districts  
12 in Pennsylvania, and Dr. Warsbit (Phonetic), the primary  
13 author of the program, with the support of Mr. Secrist and  
14 the center is visiting these schools right now and  
15 evaluating the effectiveness.

16           Now, we are seeing some good results with it and  
17 we will be sharing it with the intermediate units and so  
18 forth. So this will be coming in the next twelve months.

19           REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Do they use bikes  
20 or electric carts or is it all classroom instruction?

21           DR. HORNFECK: When you're dealing with the four  
22 through eight, we're dealing with the youngster and we put  
23 them into all types of situations. It's in relation -- when  
24 we say Caring Children, Caring Choices, it could be in the  
25 highway environment, it could be in the home environment, it

1 could be really any environment because making decisions is  
2 not just a risk management on the highway, it's risk  
3 management in life is what we're trying to get across to  
4 them at an age that they can comprehend what it is they're  
5 doing then.

6                   REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Thank you.

7                   CHAIRPERSON GEIST: This committee has had the  
8 opportunity of working with and viewing and Carnegie Mellon  
9 simulator -- driver simulator that has 25 years of  
10 experience in the police driving tactics. That simulator  
11 holds a wealth of potential for high schools for driver ed.  
12 Would the ability to do that be valuable to them, seeing  
13 what they're doing with the truck simulator teaching truck  
14 drivers? These are the kinds of things that I think have  
15 some advantage to take them to the schools. But that's your  
16 area of expertise. And maybe a graduated course CMU  
17 licensing the developing a model for the school systems in  
18 Pennsylvania. And with the ISTEA money, some of the money  
19 that we have in highway safety, we may be able to help out.  
20 We've got to look at every avenue that we can because the  
21 loss of life on the highway today is just absolutely  
22 unacceptable to this committee.

23                   And we have people who have lobbied us that we  
24 should be doing this. And as long as I've been chair we  
25 want to do this, we want to work with the folks like you to

1 see that that's facilitated.

2 DR. ROBINSON: Well, you're absolutely right.  
3 One of the reasons we don't do more of that, our excuse is  
4 money. It is very expensive. You should be encouraged to  
5 know that with NSTEA that's now been passed by the House,  
6 there is \$10 million a year being allocated for advanced  
7 instructional technology for training drivers, not just  
8 young drivers but drivers of all ages.

9 I'd encourage you as you talk to our U.S.  
10 representatives that you would encourage them to support  
11 what you just said in terms of our needs here in the  
12 Commonwealth. I am serving on a committee to help plan how  
13 that activity takes place, but it's essential to use that  
14 type of technology to improve what we're doing with all of  
15 our drivers, and it is rapidly approaching that that  
16 technology will be in ours schools.

17 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Platts.

18 REPRESENTATIVE PLATTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
19 One comment. I appreciate all the data. Two numbers that  
20 jump out at me is more than 50 percent of young drivers that  
21 have a permit get their license within two months of getting  
22 the permit, and approximately 15 percent of those drivers  
23 only had 18 hours or less practice with their parents.  
24 Those numbers jump out. Previously Mr. Glatfelter talked  
25 about really learning or not learning prior to becoming 16

1 and those numbers seem to support really education and  
2 training for the most part under the permit for parental  
3 supervision once they become 16, and getting education even  
4 younger before becoming 16. Your numbers help substantiate  
5 that point. And I appreciate that data. That really makes  
6 sense.

7 DR. HORNFECK: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Marsico.

9 REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman. Several years ago I authored legislation that  
11 would require those with junior learner's permits to be  
12 accompanied by someone that would be at least 18 years of  
13 age prior to that -- I'm sorry -- learner's permit could be  
14 accompanied in a vehicle by 16 year olds. Now it's 18 years  
15 of age as you know. Do you recommend raising that  
16 to 20 or 21?

17 DR. HORNFECK: I'm going to respond and then  
18 I'm going to let Allen respond. In regards to the age of  
19 the individual that is supervising the young  
20 driver -- excuse me -- It's not just a parent, it's just not  
21 a guardian, it might be what we would call a mentor. And  
22 NHSTA has used that term and it's a good term. But I think  
23 it needs to be a responsible adult.

24 Now, how do we define adult? If we want to  
25 define it as a person holding a driver's license and being a

1 minimum of 18 years of age, then that individual should have  
2 and demonstrated a safe driving record. Eighteen years of  
3 age a responsible adult could do a good job supervising.  
4 But I think it's the individual, what they demonstrated up  
5 to that point. And that young driver will generally reflect  
6 the type of supervision that that individual is giving them  
7 when they are in that learning stage.

8 DR. ROBINSON: We recommend age 21. If you look  
9 at statistics, the 18 year old has a very, very high  
10 accident and crash rate. And to put that person in charge  
11 of the car for a new driver who is also inexperienced is  
12 just not good sense. So 21 would be a much more reasonable  
13 age.

14 REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I have one question  
16 regarding the curfew in Pennsylvania that we have, one of  
17 the few states that have a curfew midnight until 5:00 a.m.  
18 Do you feel that -- and I've seen statistics that show that  
19 Friday night between ten and midnight are the time when most  
20 of the fatalities occur with the 16 year olds. Would you  
21 support or change it to say 11:00 or something, make it  
22 maybe 11:00 on weekends or something like that?

23 DR. HORNFECK: I'm going to let Allen respond to  
24 that first, and then I'll respond.

25 DR. ROBINSON: Well, the problem with our

1 current curfew is it's not enforced. It doesn't make any  
2 difference if you're out there driving anyway.

3 I went through that with my youngest son when he  
4 had a junior license. I wanted him to get the permanent  
5 license. He said, what for, it doesn't make any difference.

6 But we do strongly encourage a curfew because of  
7 the high risk when you combine night driving, limited  
8 vision, bad weather and dealing with the other drivers on  
9 the road who in many cases unfortunately are under the  
10 influence. It's just too high a risk time for a person with  
11 limited experience to be driving. They need to get their  
12 experience during safer conditions, and as they progress  
13 into the intermediate and full license stage, then they can  
14 do the night driving.

15 What is the best hours? I'm not sure. Because  
16 of the many social things, 10:00 is way to early. Many  
17 question eleven. It's much simpler to go from a twelve to  
18 five to curfew, in other words, they can't drive during that  
19 time frame, and that will have a significant impact on the  
20 high risk area of nighttime driving.

21 DR. HORNFECK: Not in your report, but in our  
22 data we showed the highest number of collisions as far as  
23 for the young driver, reported and nonreported, between 7:00  
24 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Seven p.m. to 10:00 p.m., 21 percent of  
25 our collisions occurred. Ten p.m. and later, 4 percent.

1 That was for all collisions reported and nonreported.

2 I agree with you that fatalities occur late at  
3 night. But predominantly crashes occur between 7:00 a.m.  
4 and 7:00 p.m. In fact our highest four-hour block of time  
5 was between -- I should say six-hour block of time was  
6 between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. And you think of it, when  
7 are they most predominantly using their vehicle -- driving  
8 to and from school, weekends, et cetera.

9 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Years ago on this committee  
10 we addressed a series of bills, one of which was the West  
11 Virginia plan that you drop out of school, you lost your  
12 license. And we looked at some other things. And during  
13 those hearings it became quite evident that teenagers really  
14 didn't care about the fines. They were were  
15 inconsequential. What they really cared about was having  
16 their driver's license. And that was the severest  
17 punishment that the state could develop was not punish them  
18 in certain areas and the other way was to take their driving  
19 privileges. Thank you very much for testifying.

20 Our next group is Verena Schlusche, Holly  
21 Tibbens, Laura Tobin, Heather Milligan, and their  
22 instructor, Mr. Bob Schellenberg, who's outnumbered four to  
23 one by women. Mr. Schellenberg, who's going to lead off in  
24 your group?

25 MR. SCHELLENBERG: Well, they elected me to lead

1 off. They're pretty much here -- they would like more so to  
2 answer questions than do a whole lot of talking I believe.

3           First of all, let me speak on behalf of a lot of  
4 things that have already been said, mandatory driver  
5 education. I got in this business 30 years ago and I felt  
6 very strongly about it. But I think before we start talking  
7 about mandatory education in any field, we've got to make  
8 sure we've have good programs in place. And I think this  
9 has hurt driver education over the years. Not all schools  
10 have good programs in place. And as long as we have people  
11 like Dr. Hornfeck and Dr. Robinson and Mr. Secrist involved,  
12 I think we can get good programs in place and then let's  
13 make it mandatory.

14           We mandate so many other programs. We mandate  
15 phys ed and art and music and math and sciences and  
16 everything. We don't mandate the one thing that's taking  
17 the lives of these kids, and that's driver education.

18           We are not perfect. I've never found a perfect  
19 math teacher or a science teacher. We are not perfect. But  
20 if a good program is in place, learning is going to take  
21 place. We've just got to make sure that these programs are  
22 being presented.

23           I often say to students when we're out driving  
24 after I've gone over the same concept three or four times  
25 and the same mistake is made again, there's more teaching



1 taking place in this car than there is learning. It's  
2 either my fault or yours. We've got to figure out which one  
3 it is, but we've got to make sure that learning is taking  
4 place. And if we can get good driver education programs in  
5 place, I think that's very important.

6 I think an area we have to look at is funding.  
7 Years ago the motorcycle foundation increased their permit  
8 fees to increase the education program and, boy, what we  
9 saw. If you're familiar with the motorcycle foundation, it  
10 is tremendous what they're teaching people.

11 I would like to see us increase permit fees. We  
12 charge a kid five dollars for a permit. That's not a lot of  
13 money in today's age. It's been that forever. We charge  
14 five dollars a year for a driver's license. Let's raise  
15 that maybe to ten dollars and let the people know the  
16 increased fee is being used to implement good driver  
17 education programs. And once again I emphasize they must be  
18 good programs, they must be well presented.

19 I support the zero tolerance. I think this is a  
20 no-brainer. I think this is something as long as we have a  
21 drinking age of 21, I don't think that requires a whole lot  
22 of discussion.

23 I know these people hate the word as much as I  
24 hate using it, immaturity. I tell my students, I tell their  
25 parents at our parents meeting, I don't expect you to be

1 mature -- I don't expect your child to be mature. How  
2 boring to be 16 years of age and be mature. You're still  
3 learning, you're still growing. The thing we've got to  
4 somehow do is when they open up that door, sit down behind  
5 that steering wheel, there somehow has to be an instant  
6 maturity process that takes place. And that's going to be  
7 an awful lot of work on the part of us as teachers, on the  
8 part of parents and, of course, on the part of students.

9 Cumberland Valley had a very severe accident  
10 last year as many of you are aware. We hate to use that as  
11 a learning experience, but we can't do anything about what  
12 happened, we can only try and build and learn from what did  
13 happen. And our students, it was a temporary thing. We now  
14 have students driving around in cars that are dedicated to  
15 those students. And the kids that drive cars aren't wearing  
16 seat belts. So we've got to do more in the area of getting  
17 it more into these kids' heads other than just a shock  
18 treatment. It's got to be a true learning process that  
19 carries over the years.

20 I make the statement, and I plan on living on  
21 the royalties on this when I retire, the only difference  
22 between a stunt driver, s-t-u-n-t, and a student driver is  
23 the letters d-e, driver education. I think we can really  
24 make some great strides with young people if we can impress  
25 upon them not fear factor, not try to scare them into being

1 good drivers, make them responsible citizens.

2 I like the fact that we're now starting with our  
3 kids in second and third grade where they'll now be  
4 able to -- they'll be age 16 and they've been learning this  
5 all along how to make these mature decisions. And we're  
6 going to continue with that, and hopefully that's going to  
7 keep getting better and better over the years.

8 I thank your panel for the interest. The  
9 speakers that were here earlier, what a great job they do  
10 supporting -- Indiana University, Department of Ed.

11 Let me speak to that. If we're going to  
12 implement mandatory driver ed in the State of Pennsylvania,  
13 we've got to increase our Department of Education staff or  
14 can we do it with the Department of Transportation where  
15 we're going to go out and monitor these programs.

16 The years -- I mean when I first started, there  
17 were three people working at Department of Ed. Down to two  
18 and a secretary. Down to two and the secretary -- got rid  
19 of the secretary. Down to one and the secretary. Now it's  
20 pretty much Mr. Secrist sharing a secretary. So in that  
21 area, once again I would like to see us maybe increase it so  
22 we can go out and monitor these schools, weed out these bad  
23 programs, make sure these people know that they are  
24 responsible for the program they're presenting and they must  
25 own up to it.

1           Now, I have with me in my panel -- I'm sorry. I  
2 should have gone over her name with you. She's an exchange  
3 student from Germany. Her name is Verena Schlusche. That's  
4 close. I'm having trouble with it myself. She, of course,  
5 as an exchange student. As every exchange student, when  
6 they come to the United States, the first question they ask  
7 when they get off the airplane is how can you guarantee I'm  
8 going to have a license when I go back to Germany. Because  
9 she knows once she goes back to Germany, if she doesn't have  
10 a license, it's going to cost her thousands of dollars. It  
11 may be 18 until she finally gets around to it.

12           And in Pennsylvania and the United States we are  
13 much more lenient when it comes to licensing.

14           Are they totally right? I don't believe so.  
15 I've heard people say, well, let's raise the driving age to  
16 18. You've eliminated driver ed now because they're out of  
17 school. They're not going to take it in college. So I  
18 don't think that's the whole answer. I do think the  
19 graduated licensing is a good area.

20           We have with us Laura Tobin. Who is the  
21 president of our SADD foundation at Cumberland Valley High  
22 School. Holly Tibbens and Heather Milligan are students who  
23 have gone through our program, as all four of these ladies  
24 have. So if you have any questions of this distinguished  
25 panel, please feel free to ask them or me anything you would

1 like to know.

2 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. On the right,  
3 Representative Strittmatter.

4 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Thank you very  
5 much. We appreciate your presentation and being available  
6 for questions. I guess the question I have for the students  
7 is that we've heard about the age limits, but the fact is  
8 you take on other responsibilities and all of a sudden we  
9 say when it comes to driving we have different standards.  
10 That would be one question. The other question I have is  
11 are we making a mistake by having the schools do this and we  
12 don't ask the schools -- hunter safety, for instance. Many  
13 students are out in the field, over a million hunters, they  
14 go out, a million in the field and many of those are  
15 students that are well below 16. The drug and alcohol  
16 training, the DARE program that's in the schools starting  
17 even earlier, don't really have a need for that in the  
18 schools because the drinking age is 21. So I throw those  
19 questions out to students and ask you in turn to reply to.  
20 Is that your thinking?

21 MS. TIBBENS: I think that the driving training  
22 should be more like a program like the DARE program. I  
23 think the driving training program should be more a program  
24 like DARE or like the swimming programs because -- see, I  
25 don't know -- I moved from the State of Virginia and my

1 sister went through getting her license in Virginia and it's  
2 a much harder process. They're required to go out of school  
3 and take defensive driving courses, they're required to pay  
4 for it. They have to do far more many hours. They have to  
5 drive on the highways and it's just a more structured  
6 program than here.

7 I just think it was a lot better because you get  
8 more experience. Not just your own driving but to know how  
9 to react to other people's driving recklessly. Looking at  
10 stuff -- the other person, not themselves.

11 MS. MILLIGAN: I'm Heather. And I think like  
12 her I think that lack of experience has everything to do  
13 with it. And maybe if they had behind the wheel for a  
14 longer period of time and then like they get their license  
15 for maybe a year. I don't know. I just think the lack of  
16 experience is the big thing and if they had more time on the  
17 roads with adults.

18 MS. TOBIN: I'm Laura Tobin. I think driver's  
19 ed is important. And I know you were talking about the  
20 hunters and the swimming, and I think that even though it's  
21 in the news about all these accidents, I think a lot of  
22 people don't realize, especially parents a lot of the times,  
23 don't realize just how dangerous it can be.

24 Like with hunting they have guns, and if you're  
25 raised in a family that hunts you are taught that from day

1 one when you go hunting that this is how do it. But there  
2 are a lot of kids out there who get their licenses whose  
3 parents don't take the time to do that. And I think that  
4 the school, it's important to have that because not only are  
5 you affecting yourself in your driving but you're affecting  
6 all those other kids that go to your school and who are  
7 driving with you.

8                   And for the swimming, I know at Cumberland  
9 Valley we do have a swimming program and we are taught  
10 safety things and I think that is important also.

11                   MR. SCHELLENBERG: I think it's hard to draw a  
12 parallel between hunting safety, very important, swimming  
13 safety, extremely important. We're very proud that nobody  
14 can graduate from Cumberland Valley High School that doesn't  
15 know how to swim. But we're talking here about an activity  
16 that everybody does. We're talking about an activity that  
17 takes 43,000 lives a year. It sends millions of people to  
18 the hospital every year. To put in into the private sector,  
19 I think we lose an awful lot. I think keep it in the hands  
20 of -- once again I go back to quality programs. I think  
21 drive education is the answer. And I'm ready to retire so  
22 I'm not fighting for my job.

23                   REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Is it true you  
24 students are 16 or many of you are juniors and seniors?

25                   MS. MILLIGAN: I'm a junior.

1 MS. TIBBENS: I'm a junior.

2 MS. TOBIN: I'm a senior.

3 MS. TIBBENS: I just started the driver ed  
4 program this year couple months. I just turned 16 like in  
5 December. I'm just starting to learn how to drive and how  
6 to get around.

7 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Did you have your  
8 license for long before you started driver's ed?

9 MS. TIBBENS: I don't have my license. I have  
10 my permit.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: In many schools  
12 isn't is true that the waiting list -- that they end up  
13 taking the course after they've been driving a couple years  
14 to get the insurance discount?

15 MR. SCHELLENBERG: You brought up an excellent  
16 point. I'm glad to address that. At Cumberland Valley High  
17 School we take great pride this year I have not had a  
18 senior -- or a licensed driver to take out on the road yet.  
19 Because our program is so great at Cumberland Valley -- I'm  
20 not referring to myself, I'm referring to our school  
21 district -- we get to students before they get their  
22 license.

23 So many programs -- boy, you just used the word  
24 insurance discount -- I already know how to drive, I just  
25 want to get an insurance discount. If you want to get under



1 the skin of a driver ed teacher, say those words. And I'll  
2 tell students go out and look above my door again, is there  
3 anything there about insurance? I don't think so. I'm a  
4 driver education teacher. I'll teach you how to drive.

5 I think that's important. Good programs teach  
6 kids when they're ready and willing to learn. Like any  
7 activity it's hard to teach somebody how to do something  
8 they already think they know how to do. I'll tell them your  
9 parents go out and pay \$50 an hour or a half hour for a golf  
10 lesson, will they pay a couple extra dollars in taxes for a  
11 good driver education program because it is I feel that  
12 important.

13 But I feel it is very important we get to the  
14 student when they have the permit. Don't wait until they  
15 get to the point that they have a license. Just based on my  
16 experience over the years, it is not a good experience  
17 trying to teach licensed drivers how to drive because  
18 they've already got the license, they already pretty much  
19 have their habits, they'll maybe tolerate me because they  
20 want the insurance discount. But if we can get to them and  
21 a student will come out and say, Mr. Shellenberg, I've never  
22 driven before, great. That means you don't have any bad  
23 habits and you're going to think I'm very smart if I can get  
24 them when they're ready and willing to learn.

25 And this is something maybe a little unique at

1 Cumberland Valley. A lot of schools have waiting lists. I  
2 know a school in the area right now that can't even get you  
3 in this summer, let alone starting next week. A student who  
4 comes into my office this morning and signs up for driving  
5 will start driving at the end of next week.

6 Now, they do have the 30-day grace period. They  
7 receive a temporary permit for 30 days, then when they get  
8 the white permit. We also provide them with taking them up  
9 for their exam and so on. But we do have them during that  
10 period of time when they are just learning how to drive. I  
11 think we're much more effective because of that.

12 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Would you agree  
13 that it should be -- you concentrated on this because it's  
14 your job dealing with new drivers, but I think we've heard  
15 testimony before that the problem is is the fact that we  
16 feel that once we take the test or once we begin to drive  
17 that we know it all, when really it's a continuing  
18 ed -- really a concern for everyone?

19 I found it to be invaluable when I worked as a  
20 police officer to get that training again. When I went to  
21 the state police driving, I thought that that was very  
22 instructive as well as my work with the telephone company,  
23 Bell Atlantic, they required a mandatory driving course. So  
24 I found that myself, that maybe it would be good for the  
25 students if all the adults get something out of continuing

1 education if we all learn more about better driving that  
2 would be better for the students if the parents were also  
3 having to do the same thing, continuing ed number of hours.

4 MS. TIBBENS: I don't know if my parents had to  
5 take a driver's ed course. I don't know.

6 MR. SHELLENBERG: I taught them.

7 MS. TIBBENS: But I think you can always learn  
8 more, you know. So I think that would be a good thing  
9 because there's a lot of older adults that don't really know  
10 about that. It's a good idea.

11 REPRESENTATIVE STRITTMATTER: Thank you, Mr.  
12 Chairman.

13 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. We're going to  
14 save our hostess for the last. Mr. Parsells.

15 MR. PARSELLS: Young boys -- I don't see any  
16 young boys here. Is there a program or driver's ed  
17 manual --

18 MR. SCHELLENBERG: As it is with the state, it's  
19 not a mandatory program. As a sophomore they're  
20 automatically enrolled in the classroom 30 hours. That's  
21 just put on their schedule. If they would go to their  
22 guidance counselor and say I do not want to participate in  
23 that, we cannot by law require them to do that. We never  
24 had that situation occur. I hope it never does occur.

25 As far as behind the wheel training, we are

1 reaching close to 97 percent of our student body. Nobody  
2 has ever left Cumberland Valley since I've been here that  
3 wanted driver ed and couldn't get it.

4           Now, we've had a lot of kids go home and say to  
5 their parents, can I go for my test next week, the driver ed  
6 program is filled up and they can't get to me. If you've  
7 ever heard that in the Cumberland Valley School District, it  
8 is not true.

9           Equal participation. Guys and girls. My  
10 preparation for this presentation was -- didn't have a whole  
11 lot of time. Walked into school this morning, walked down  
12 the hall, and I knew I wanted to get Verena because of her  
13 German exchange situation, and I found that -- Holly went  
14 driving with me already this morning so I had her and I ran  
15 into these other ladies in the hall. No, this is not a  
16 sexist panel. They tried to duck but I caught them.

17           CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Platts.

18           REPRESENTATIVE PLATTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
19 Could each of you just share your personal -- how long you  
20 had your permit, one said you had your driving permit  
21 several months. Each share your specific.

22           MS. TOBIN: Well, I went to get my permit a  
23 month after my 16th birthday. And then from there probably  
24 about two months until I got my driver's license.

25           MS. SCHLUSCHE: When I came here I was 16 years

1 old and I turned 17 in October. But like I wasn't in a  
2 hurry to get my permit. And I thought it would be hard and  
3 stuff so I just wanted to learn and study for it until this  
4 year, January sometime. And then I took the behind the  
5 wheel and I took it two times because I thought like maybe I  
6 need more practice because everyone else practiced with  
7 their parents. So I took it two times. Then I took the  
8 test.

9 MS. TIBBENS: My birthday is over the summer so  
10 I had to work out something with Mr. Schellenberg and do the  
11 summer program. I think about three or four weeks after I  
12 turned 16 I went for my permit, and then about a month later  
13 received my white permit and then I went for my license and  
14 I got it on the first try.

15 MS. MILLIGAN: I just turned 16 in December and  
16 I went for my permit a month after that. And I got my  
17 permit then and I received my white permit a month after  
18 that and I've been taking behind the wheel like for about a  
19 month now or so.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PLATTS: One of the focuses is  
21 mandatory three months permit before you get licensed. The  
22 experiences of yourself and your friends, do you think it  
23 would be wise as far as helping ensure more practice out  
24 there --

25 MS. TOBIN: I think it would help, but I guess

1 some people wouldn't take the time to practice more. I  
2 would hope -- I had one friend whose parents refused to take  
3 her out when she got her permit. She went through driver's  
4 ed and she learned how to drive and she got her license, but  
5 she hasn't driven since so -- but I think it would help some  
6 people.

7 MS. TIBBENS: Yeah, I think it would definitely  
8 help because I know after I got my license I didn't know  
9 what to do just because, you know, I don't know where I'd  
10 go, and then you're always really scared at certain  
11 situations that you're still unsure of. So I guess that  
12 would help.

13 MS. MILLIGAN: I think that would help also that  
14 three months would give you time to gain more experience, to  
15 kind of feel your way around so when you're supposed to go  
16 or who's supposed to go first so you don't second-guess  
17 yourself so much because usually accidents occur when you  
18 second-guess. If you just feel more sure of yourself, you  
19 know, how to do this or you know where you're going.

20 REPRESENTATIVE PLATTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Let me follow that up and  
22 ask you questions. When we were doing the hearings years  
23 ago about this, one of the suggestions made was that if you  
24 only gave driving permits based upon how people scored on  
25 achievement tests that test scores across the state would

1 skyrocket. And we're always looking for those benchmarks.  
2 Would anything like that work in your estimation at the high  
3 school level? Because we really believe that many are  
4 dropping out, if you lose your license, it's worked in West  
5 Virginia. But if we tied that to tenth grade test scores,  
6 as I said before, test scores would skyrocket. Would this  
7 work for you folks? Would you study harder if you had to  
8 get a certain grade in order to be able to get a driver's  
9 license?

10 MS. TOBIN: I think so. But I'm sure there are  
11 people out there who would study and wouldn't be able to get  
12 the mark. I guess you would have to make the mark like  
13 reasonable.

14 But also I know something that local high  
15 schools around here, I'm not quite sure which one it is, but  
16 something about the parking sticker, like it would affect  
17 that. Because I know a lot of accidents happen driving to  
18 and from school. So I think that would be another thing to  
19 consider too.

20 MS. TIBBENS: Yeah, I definitely think I would  
21 study a lot harder if I had to get a certain grade to get my  
22 license. But I think like she said it would have to be  
23 reasonable.

24 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Well, we have academic  
25 standards, we have academic standards to get into college,

1 all these other standards. Driving is a privilege.  
2 Although our society has come to accept casualties and  
3 maimings on the highway. We have acceptable losses, they  
4 don't seem to phase us. We're accepting all these deaths  
5 each year on the highway and we're looking for ways to work  
6 that out. Do you have Any suggestions? We're looking for  
7 solutions that work. Maybe one of you can respond to that.

8 MR. SCHELLENBERG: Something I say with  
9 students, I say could you imagine you're sitting at home  
10 Saturday afternoon, one of your friends calls and says I'm  
11 coming to pick you up, we're going to go out and do  
12 something. What are we going to do. Well, I can't tell you  
13 exactly, but I will tell you 43,000 people died last year  
14 doing what we're going to do, another million got sent to  
15 the hospital. Would you want them to come pick  
16 you up? No.

17 We would not tolerate any activity, whether it  
18 be a sport, whatever, that is as tragic as driving, and yet  
19 we have people going out and operating vehicles at a low  
20 level of their potential ability.

21 I mentioned earlier about golf lessons. People  
22 pay all this money to take such pride in performing these  
23 other skills. Then they go out and jump in the car, drive  
24 sloppily, don't put their seat belts on, but they're so  
25 proud of that golf score, that tennis match. We've got to



1 somehow equate -- hey, this is a lot more serious and we  
2 realize it.

3 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Steve.

4 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: My youngest child, my  
5 daughter just turned 20, so I can say I survived six teenage  
6 drivers. As a parent I have survived each of them getting  
7 their permit. I assumed I also had six exemplary drivers  
8 because I was never aware of violations of their license. I  
9 made the mistake of talking to a couple recently and I found  
10 out they operated under the theory of what I don't know  
11 won't hurt me.

12 I'm curious to your reaction to that. Presently  
13 the Department of Transportation does not inform parents  
14 when their child has earned any points under the point  
15 system. Do you think that that would be meaningful to  
16 require that the department notify parents?

17 MS. TOBIN: Well, I think definitely. I think  
18 parents need to know when that's occurring. That's the only  
19 way one of the solutions -- I think the solution to the  
20 problem, yes, definitely.

21 MS. TIBBENS: Yes, I definitely think so also  
22 that the parents should know about these things. I thought  
23 that they got a letter. They don't get a letter? Yes, I  
24 definitely think they should know.

25 MS. MILLIGAN: I agree with that. The thought

1 occurred to me like maybe if I got pulled over my parents  
2 would find out. I think that would kind of keep me on the  
3 speed limit because it's not so much -- I wouldn't care  
4 about the fine. You can always pay the fine. But coming  
5 home and having to deal with your parents is something  
6 different. So the fine wouldn't mean as much as just coming  
7 home to my parents.

8                   CHAIRPERSON GEIST: The young folks in Europe  
9 seem have so much more freedom I think than here. You see  
10 14 and 15 year olds traveling, backpacking all over the  
11 country. But you don't see young folks all over driving.  
12 What's the difference in Germany as opposed to here?

13                   MS. SCHLUSCHE: We have to be 18 I know, but  
14 it's not a problem because in Germany everything is near.  
15 Like if you want to go to the city to go shopping or the  
16 movies, we just walk there or you can ride the bike or we  
17 can even ride the bus. Like we have buses everywhere. We  
18 can go wherever we want to so we don't really depend on the  
19 car.

20                   And I think it's okay to be 18 to drive then.  
21 Like here if you want to go to a friend's house, you may  
22 drive for 20 minutes to get there and there's not a way.  
23 You have to use the car. So it's different like from  
24 Germany I think.

25                   CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you.

1           REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: I just have one final  
2 question. We had a young man in my district who the day he  
3 got his junior license was caught going 54 miles an hour in  
4 a 35 mile-an-hour zone, got four points. Within the same  
5 first month of getting his junior driver's license he got  
6 caught going 73 miles an hour in a 25 mile-an-hour zone and  
7 got five more points.

8           What kind of penalty do you think a young man  
9 who quickly secured two violations should receive?

10          MS. TIBBENS: I think that there is no reason  
11 for him to be doing that, to be speeding like that, I think  
12 after he just got his license. I think like not a lot of  
13 kids do, getting their licenses, they're all excited  
14 and they'll be like, well, it was mistake, I'm young, I'm  
15 still learning. But there was really no reason for him to  
16 be going 75 miles an hour. So I think that his license  
17 should be taken away. And like at least for a considerable  
18 amount of time. I'd want to know why he was given his  
19 license and why he was given that privilege.

20          REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: How long do you think it  
21 should be taken away?

22          MS. TIBBENS: I don't think I would be a good  
23 judge of how long to take it away considering I'm 16. I'd  
24 want to get my license. I don't think I could be a good  
25 judge as to how long my license should be taken,

1 reprimanding me. So I don't think I'm a good judge of how  
2 long it should be taken away.

3 MR. SCHELLENBERG: Years ago -- once again, when  
4 I got into this business we were allowed -- we could tell a  
5 kid until you turn 18, you are charged with any violation of  
6 the vehicle code, a moving violation or you're involved in  
7 any accident that you are responsible for, you lose your  
8 license until you're 18. I mean it was just cut and dry.

9 Now students come to me for a senior license, a  
10 senior license of course gives them that midnight to 5:00  
11 window to drive, I have to ask them two questions. Question  
12 one, have you ever been involved in an accident in which you  
13 were the operator of one of the vehicles. The next question  
14 I must ask him, have you ever been convicted of any  
15 violation of the vehicle code.

16 How many times do I hear, yeah, but. This is  
17 not -- it's not true -- it's not a multiple choice. It's  
18 yes or no. Well, yes, but, I got a speeding ticket but the  
19 officer told me I will not get points, it will not affect my  
20 senior license. They're charged with failure to obey a  
21 posted speed limit as opposed to speeding. The fine is  
22 considerably less, and the penalty considerably less.

23 And the kids are driving away with a smile on  
24 their face. They just got a speeding ticket and they're  
25 happy. Boy, isn't he cool. He could have charged me with

1 speeding. And I think that is an area that we get so  
2 frustrated when we see that happening.

3 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: Can I ask the other  
4 students what their reaction would be, what kind of penalty  
5 should that young man receive for these violations?

6 MS. MILLIGAN: Well, I think that losing your  
7 license till you're 18 is a good idea. I don't know.

8 MS. SCHLUSCHE: I also think like you should  
9 take the license away. I don't know for how long, but it  
10 should be long enough to make them think about what they did  
11 so they won't repeat it and nobody else would like try to do  
12 it again. So you should take the license away for a time.

13 MS. TOBIN: I too agree with the taking away the  
14 license because I think fines -- I mean like she said, they  
15 can be paid. I don't know. You probably have to come up  
16 with some system obviously that for maybe ten miles over you  
17 take it away for a month or something like that, something  
18 like they said, drastic enough that would be noticed and  
19 missed.

20 REPRESENTATIVE NICKOL: This young man lost his  
21 license for 15 days only. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON GEIST: We really would like to  
23 thank Representative Pat Vance who has been my friend in the  
24 General Assembly for a lot of years for allowing us to come  
25 down here today.

1           And I think that the four students we have  
2 listened to, you guys are just really super. And if this is  
3 what we heard across the state, we wouldn't be having all  
4 the problems we're having. Unfortunately you know this is  
5 not the way it is everywhere. My wife teaches in a school  
6 where about half the kids' parents are kind of busy and are  
7 just not there. So we have to look at the well-being of  
8 everyone in the state, and our responsibility has certainly  
9 changed over the last ten years.

10           This information that we're gathering today will  
11 definitely come on our committee probably very beginning of  
12 the next term, there are very few days left in this year,  
13 and what we'll probably do is draft this legislation and  
14 float it amongst the experts and have everybody review it  
15 and come back with comments. What we would like to do is  
16 have a piece of legislation and be able to hit the ground  
17 running as we reconvene for the next session of the General  
18 Assembly and pass what I would consider very meaningful  
19 legislation, and that really means driving is a privilege  
20 and it should be regulated for the best interest of all of  
21 those who drive.

22           Pat, to dismiss I think we should call on you  
23 for remarks.

24           REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: Thank you. I want to  
25 particularly thank Bob Schellenberg. We have been talking

1 over the years and I know of your concerns.

2 I just have one quick question. How long do you  
3 believe that someone should have their learner's permit  
4 before they would be allowed to take the test?

5 MR. SCHELLENBERG: The length of time I think is  
6 hard to determine. I think it's what are we going to do  
7 during that one month, three months, four months, six  
8 months. Once again I come back -- and I realize it is my  
9 profession -- I feel a student who completes a good driver  
10 education program, six hours of behind-the-wheel  
11 instruction -- I think another area we miss on this, six  
12 hours of observation time in the back seat. Much more  
13 learning can take place in the back seat many times than in  
14 the front seat because it's a more relaxed atmosphere in the  
15 back seat without the hands on. And I always tell my people  
16 in the back seat involved in the driving, hey, when this  
17 happens, what would you do. So they're back there and  
18 they're involved. So we've got six hours and six. Even  
19 though their hands aren't on the wheel, they're sitting in  
20 that back seat, they should be learning.

21 So, you know, if it's two months of good quality  
22 instruction time, they're ready for their license. If it's  
23 six months of waiting, no sense of my getting my permit,  
24 learning how to drive, I can't take my license for six more  
25 months anyhow -- as long as they're spending that period of

1 time, whether it be a month, whether it be six months -- I  
2 know we are thankful for this 30-day window now where it  
3 used to be you could get your permit one day and get your  
4 driver's test the same day. So we're so thankful for this  
5 30-day window. It keeps the kids under control a little bit  
6 as far as licensing. But I wouldn't mind seeing it being  
7 extended to two months, as much as six, but I'm afraid that  
8 would hurt our program.

9           It would help a lot of schools. It would hurt  
10 us making kids wait that long because of our program being  
11 ready to go right away with them. So maybe, you know,  
12 depending if it is six months that you could take driver ed  
13 both in the classroom and behind the wheel, not one month.

14           REPRESENTATIVE VANCE: The members on the panel  
15 say if we save one life, and I appreciate all of your input  
16 today, and as usual we want to cooperate as much as we can.  
17 Thank you very much.

18           MR. SCHELLENBERG: And thank you, Representative  
19 Vance. You've been one of the best friends Cumberland  
20 Valley's ever had. Thank you.

21           (Whereupon, the hearing was concluded at 11:31  
22 a.m.)

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I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me on the within proceedings, and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same.



Pamela L. Packer  
Court Reporter-Notary Public

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