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            HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
        COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
            House Bill 10
    House Transportation Committee
            Main Capitol Building
            Room 60, East Wing
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Monday, March 8, 1999 - 3:05 p.m.
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BEFORE:
Honorable Richard Geist, Majority Chairperson Honorable Ellen Bard Honorable Teresa Forcier Honorable Dick Hess Honorable Dennis Leh
Honorable Ronald Marsico Honorable John Pippy Honorable Samuel Smith Honorable Russell Fairchild Honorable Joseph Battisto, Minority Chairperson Honorable Frank Gigliotti Honorable Susan Laughlin Honorable Joseph Markosek Honorable Anthony Melio Honorable Joseph Preston Honorable Lawrence Roberts Honorable Dante Santoni
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ALSO PRESENT:

Eric C. Bugaile
Majority Research Analyst

Theresa Jones Majority Secretary

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American Drivers \& Traffic Safety Education Assoriation
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CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I want to call this meeting to order. I'll make a couple of opening remarks. Then I'll ask Joe to make a couple of remarks, and then we'll have Theresa call the roll. And then when she calls the roll, make sure you guys all wave so everybody knows who you are.

The bill that we're going to talk about today, House Bill 10, is a culmination of a lot of work, hearings and input from a lot of people, both the professionals in safety, the Department of Transportation and the general public.

I would first of all like to thank our staff, Eric, Paul and Dana, who have done a fantastic job on our side and Roseanne and Paul on the Democratic side of this Committee. I think that what you'll see is very much of a joint venture on this Committee on the bill.

We're going to get the testimony today. We finally have a concrete piece in the bill in print, and we will move on from there. I like to run these meetings and keep them on time and save questions and answers then really until the end. That's about all I have to say. And I think that, Joe, you might want to say a few words. And we'll get started.

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Thank You, Rick. Yes, just a few words. First of all, I think the display
to my right on the board there indicates clearly the grim reminders of the fact that we need to do something about licensing teen drivers. There's nothing magical about what we do.

But I think House Bill 10 is a good beginning. I think it's very appropriate, Mr. Chairman, that we start out with this bill. It focuses on training, it focuses on the importance of education, the importance about getting serious about young drivers desperate about what to do.

So I'm happy to participate in this hearing. Hopefully, we'll get something good from the participants in order to either improve the bill or move it along. Thank you, Rick.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Theresa, would you please call the roll?

MS. JONES: Chairman Geist?
CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Present.

MS. JONES: Representative Argall?
Representative Bard?
REPRESENTATIVE BARD: Here.

MS. JONES: Druce? Fairchild? Forcier?
REPRESENTATIVE FORCIER: Here.
MS. JONES: Hess?

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Present.

MS . JONES: Leh?

REPRESENTATIVE LEH: Here.
MS. JONES: Maher? Marsico?
REPRESENTATIVE MARSICO: Here.
MS. JONES: Pippy?
REPRESENTATIVE PIPPY: Here.
MS. JONES: Platts? Smith?
REPRESENTATIVE SMITH: Here.
MS. JONES: Stairs? Strittmatter? Chairman
Battisto?
REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Here.
MS. JONES: Representative Daley? Gigliotti?
REPRESENTATIVE GIGLIOTTI: Here.
MS. JONES: Laughlin?
REPRESENTATIVE LAUGHLIN: Here.
MS. JONES: Levdansky? Markosek?
REPRISENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Here.
MS. JONES: Melio?
REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Here.
MS. JONES: Petrarca? Preston? Roberts?
REPRESENTATIVE ROBERTS: Here.
MS. JONES: And Santoni?
REPRESENTATIVE SANTONI: Here.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: All right. The first
presenter is Allen Robinson. Dr. Robinson is President and CEO of American Drivers and Traffic Safety Education

Association. And if you have written remarks for the record, would you please submit those?

And if you could, we would really appreciate it if you could summarize your presentation verbally. I think we'd get a lot more out of that than listening to read remarks. Thank you. Dr. Robinson.

DR. ROBINSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Committee. It's a pleasure to be here today to provide testimony on House Bill 10. My remarks have been given to your representative. I will paraphrase what's in the handout.

Certainly, this is a start in the right direction. We need to do something about the problems associated with young driver fatalities. However, as we do that, we need to look at obviously what is the effectiveness of all of our highway safety programs.

And I want to mention, too, that we don't have very substantial results. You might know that our seat belt activities heve been less than successful between 1976 and -- I mean 1996 and 1997. Our fatalities went up 17 percent. That's 117 deaths.

Also, as we have continued to fight the alcohol driving problem, we have never been able to reduce highway fatalities by one percent. Yet these are very important programs, and they're programs that must continue
and must be improved.
So when people tell us that driver education doesn't work and should not be a part of graduated driver licensing, they're failing to look at what driver education can do. The often quoted De Kalb study in De Kalb, Georgia showed a 4 percent reduction in fatalities of a group of trained drivers.

If we could get 4 percent today, it would be phenomenal. What we do need is a comprehensive graduated driver licensing program that has incentives, it has motivation, and it has training. I believe we can do that with the initiative that you've established here. And I know it takes money.

A couple of suggestions. And nobody likes talking about money. I realize that. But the permit fee, as an example, could be raised to $\$ 50$. All of our kids wear shoes that are far more expensive than $\$ 50$. We could look at other revenue devices, the liquid fuel tax. But that's separate of what this issue is in many cases.

We need to look at, first of all, describing a comprehensive quality driver education program in conjunction with specific incentives for people to drive safely. Inexperience is a big problem, and lack of knowledge is a big problem.

If we combine education, restrictions on the
use of that license, and encourage cooperation with the parents to provide home practice, I think we can make a difference. And I encourage you to carefully consider those issues. And I certainly support your effort to make a difference. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Just to summarize what you said in the beginaing, you said the bill as written with a few exceptions. Could you state what those exceptions would be?

DR. ROBINSON: Yes. I made a couple of suggestions in my printed material. I believe that we need education. Kids can't learn by osmosis. They need specific training that says, This is what you're supposed to do. If you pass a legislative package that has restrictions and they don't know what they are, they don't know how to respond to them.

So I strongly encourage that education be a component, that it be carefully designed and it deal with what we refer to as safe driving practices. Almost everyone knows how to drive a car, but do they choose to drive it properly? And in education, we can do that. We can work at the attitude areas of how people make choices, what they determine right and wrong is, and how they relate to other drivers. It might even carry over into this road rage problem that we're having.

I also think that there ought to be a seat belt requirement for all youth who are riding in a car with a young driver. Some 67 percent of our fatalities are passengers. And I'm really concerned that when these young people are driving and other young people are in the car, if they're not properly belted, they're taking a risk that they should not take. Those would be the two primary suggestions.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I noticed in your
testimony you favor zero tolerance for alcohol. But how about drugs?

DR. ROBINSON: Yes. Both.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: All right. One other question from me. And I'll be probably asking some of the others. It's been my feeling for a long time that driver's education really should be administered by a group put together by PennDOT.

The curriculum should be set and designed by PennDOT, and funding should not come out of the general fund but should come out of liquid fuels. And the driver's education programs and driver's education teachers then should be treated as a profession and monitored and audited by the Department of Transportation. What are your feelings on something like that?

DR. ROBINSON: I'm not opposed to that. The
trend nationwide has been just as you've described it. Education for whatever reasons have not understood or have not supported the role of driver education. And when you look at the Department of Transportation who's been given the responsibility to license people, they have a better understanding of what licensing is.

They certainly have a better understanding of the statistical problems associated with young drivers. And they can do it very adequately.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Battisto and I are going to be taking a very serious look at this. And we can get away with that. Now, interdepartmental and administration, they might have a tough time doing that. But I think those of us in the General Assembly can talk about things like that. Joe.

REPRE:SENTATIVE BATTISTO: Yeah, one question. In your testimony on page 2, you talk about the tremendous reduction in the number of students taking driver education courses now as opposed to the '70s, in fact from 95 percent to 50 percent. Is this because schools have dropped driver ed., or is it because of scheduling or both or what do you --

DR. ROBINSON: When the De Kalb study came out and the statistics said driver education doesn't work, school systems across the country began dropping it. And
that's why I alluded to the fact that yes, we were unable to prove a 10 percent reduction in fatalities; but there was a 4 percent reduction for what was called the pre-driver licensing group.

But once the federal government, because of their own study, said it doesn't work and the federal bureaucracy quit supporting it, then the states quit supporting it and the local systems quit supporting it so we had a tremendous decline in the number of young people taking driver education.

And you can also see that as our 16-year-old age group continues to expand, we've had a substantial increase in the number of 16 -year-olds being killed.

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: And you seem to say as a result of the fact that we have dropped driver education courses, the death rate among 16-year-olds has risen. There's a connection perhaps?

DR. ROBINSON: I think there's a connection. How you show direct correlation is not easy to do. But obviously, if people aren't being trained, how can we expect them to do the right thing?

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Thank you.
DR. ROBINSON: But at the same time, we
haven't had the right licensing efforts which this Committee is putting forward.

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Questions? Joe Markosek.
REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Doctor, you mentioned the component relative to seat belts or the seat belt component with all of this. Do you have statistics that show how many of the fatalities that occur with these young people occur without seat belts as -- I mean do you see --

DR. ROBINSON: Not off the top of my head. I do not. I do -- I do know the percentage of 16 and 17-year-olds killed as passengers, and I could find that out for you if you would like. I'm sure that statistic is available.

REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Yeah. Okay. I think that would be interesting. It would be interesting to see that.

DR. ROBINSON: I will get that for you.
REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Thank you.
CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Dennis Leh.
REPRESENTATIVE LEH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Robinson, my question is, there seems to be a growing movement out there, I believe, that children under the age of 18 are really not mature enough to learn how to drive. Do you feel that way at all?

DR. ROBINSON: No.
REPRESENTATIVE LEH: Okay. I concur with that also. I mean, I concur with you on that.

DR. ROBINSON: I was in a meeting --
REPRESENTATIVE LEH: And I'm just concerned.
I think they need to be educated and have the experience, but I think they're plenty mature enough to get behind the wheel.

DR. ROBINSON: I was in a meeting once. And obviously, this is a little tongue in cheek. The real solution of the highway safety problem is to license people at age 25 and take the license away at 55. That's not a solution.

REPRESENTATIVE LEH: That only gives me three years.

DR. FOBINSON: I'm already out.
CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Representative Fairchild.
REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCHILD: Thank you, Dr.
Robinson. Just a quick question. In a lot of these pieces of legislation, we refer to stipulations that may occur to a -- to a -- that may occur to an individual that was involved in a crash. I assume that -- well, I'm going to ask you.

What do you do with a -- a young driver who, through no fault of his or her own, is involved in a crash?

Do you think there should be any additional stipulations provided for that would be -- perhaps stop that driver from obtaining a senior license?

DR. ROBINSON: I don't think so. If the accident report shows that the responsible person was the other vehicle and the person -- the young person operating their call -- their car was determined to be not at fault or not the cause of the accident, I don't think that they should be -- have any additional action taken towards them. REPRESENTATIVE FAIRCHILD: Thank you very much.

DR. ROBINSON: That did remind me of, Mr. Chairman, another suggestion $I$ put in here. If young people are going to get experience and if they're told they have to drive crash-free, if they are determined to be at fault in a crash or have violations, they do need some kind of immediate intervention in terms of refresher programs. CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Forcier. REPRESENTATIVE FORCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Robinson, I was curious to know if there has been any type of comparison on the exam points when these young people take their tests for their permits, if there's been any difference with the State Police giving the exams versus now that we have I believe it's PennDOT that does that?

Do you know if -- have you noticed any changes or differences where the State Police may be tougher on the -- on our young people or --

DR. ROBINSON: Not that I'm aware of.
REPRESENTATIVE FORCIER: Okay. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Representative Melio.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Dr. Robinson, were there any other studies done beside the De Kalb study?

DR. ROBINSON: There have been a variety of studies that continue to look at the effects of driver education. And in most cases, because of the problems associated with putting people in control groups, it becomes very difficult to watch them long enough to come up with good scientific evidence one way or the other.

One study that has frequently been mentioned here in our state comes from Ontario, Canada in which the group taking driver education had more accidents than the group who did not. But once you take that study in control for exposure, it was determined that the driver education group did have a better record.

And let me try to explain that because that's a little confusing at times. Obviously, if half the front table has a license and they're driving cars for 6 to 9
months before the other half gets their license, this side's going to have more violations and crashes than this side.

But once you control for exposure and both groups have driven for a year or two years, then the trained group does have a little bit better record; but it doesn't have much of a better record. And that's the problem we run into.

And that's why I illustrated seat belts and alcohol. A one percent reduction is a significant reduction when we look at young driver fatalities.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Our last questioner for this round is Representative Bard.

REPRESENTATIVE BARD: Your written testimony makes a suggestion that a $\$ 50$ fee could be added to the cost of a permit to cover driver's education. Now, do you -- does that mean that you believe that a good driver's ed. course couldn't be offered for less than $\$ 50$ per person? And if you were to offer it for less, what would you have to give up?

DR. ROBINSON: I wouldn't offer it for $\$ 50$ because you cannot do it. If you really look at the real cost associated with training -- and obviously, this
depends on what locale you're in, a lot of variables. -you're looking at somewhere in the neighborhood of $\$ 300$ to $\$ 400$ to train a young driver.

The comment on the $\$ 50$ is -- in none of my testimony have I said driver education should be mandatory. It should be available for those who want the various incentives. I don't think everybody would opt to take driver education.

And that $\$ 50$ would probably be sufficient money to support that program. Neither do I believe that from state government you should provide 100 percent funding for such a program. I still believe that the parents and the local community has a responsibility.

REPRESENTATIVE BARD: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Dr. Robinson and other presenters, we'd ask you to stay until this is over. If any of the members of the House then want to ask you guys personal questions, that we'd like them to be able to -- have you available to do that.

DR. ROBINSON: That's fine.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much. Our next presenter is Mark Hennesy, President of the Hennesy Driving School and somebody who is very interested in this legislation.

MR. HENNESY: Thank you, Chairman Geist and
members of the Committee. We welcome the opportunity to speak on House Bill 10 here. I've been involved with driver education Eor approximately 35 years, first as a teacher at Great Valley High School and then with Hennesy Driving School which I started in 1966.

In that period of time, very few, if any, educational changes have taken place as far as licensing is concerned. Right now we're talking graduated licensing. Pennsylvania's had a graduated licensing program since 1960, '65.

Our current laws require zero tolerance for alcohol. A permit holder has to hold the permit for one month. You have to be taught by someone 18 or older. You can't drive between 12:00 midnight and 5:00 a.m. And you get your senior license if you completed a driver education course at age 17.

Pennsylvania is not the only state to have a graduated licensing. Recently we've had other states, California, Illinois, a number of states. In all of those states, driver education is mandated. It's part of it. You can't get a license unless you have driver education.

House Bill 10 does not require it, but it also doesn't reward it. I'm a believer in education. I like to see a reward taking a driver education course. Back in the '60s, Pennsylvania was a leader in driver education. I
think we've fallen a little bit behind.

Our attitude now with a lot of people is we don't need professional instruction. Practice makes perfect. That's totally wrong. Perfect practice makes perfect. I have a 15 -year-old son. When he was 13 , he decided he wanted to be Tiger Woods. He wanted to play golf.

I played golf years ago, gave it up, didn't have the time. But $I$ started back so I could play with him. When I started, I had a slight fade. The ball broke to the right. And I kept working. I don't have a fade anymore. I have a slıce, which means it really breaks to the right. Finally $I$ went and took a golf lesson. CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Dick Hess and Dennis Leh are your men.

> MR. EENNESY: They understand the program then?

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Dennis goes to the right, though.

> MR. HENNESY: With a lesson -- very good.

With a lesson, $I$ could actually see what $I$ was doing wrong. So professional instruction helped. Besides, parents don't make good teachers. I tried with my son, teaching him. Take lessons boy because whatever Daddy says, what could I possibly know. I'm his father.

My oldest daughter when she learned to drive, I had her out extensively. I finally gave her to one of the other instructors that works with us. After that first lesson with him, she came back and she said, Dad, I learned so much more from Mr. Al than from you.

Now Mr. Al -- we go by first names but call him mister. -- knows no more about driver education than $I$ do. I taught him what to teach. But she listened to him. It wasn't Daddy. We all know how it was when we were 16. Moms and dads just don't know a lot.

Down in our end of the state recently, we had a tragic accident in Delaware County, which everyone is aware of. Five young people lost their life. Immediately, it was the highway's fault. Then it was the inexperience. And we found out apparently it was drugs. Maybe if they had driver education, maybe this wouldn't have happened.

I'm a. big proponent of education. House Bill 10 does not stress enough education for me. It's a step in the right direction. I think it's really a big help. We're getting 50 hours of practice, and that's better than nothing. But let's get 50 hours of practice of what should be taught.

Let us, a professional, be it a driving school or a high school driver education teacher, let us give the basics and then mom and dad reinforce it. Some of the
things that I would like to see added, again being big on education, no person under 18 could have a driver's license unless you are in a high school, be it public, private, parochial or in-home schooling program. Stay in school.

If you say we're going to take your license away from you if you don't stay in school, most of the kids will stay or stay until they graduate. A two-month restriction on passengers. With my children when they were licensed, they were not allowed to have a passenger for one month.

My kids drove every day. I gave them a car. They drove every day. They were quite experienced before they could have a passenger. They're not allowed to drive with anyone who has less than a month or two experience. When we get a bunch of kids in the car, that's when you start to fool around.

Probably about 14 years or 15 years ago, there was a young lady killed on a Monday driving to Owen J. Roberts High School. She was licensed on Thursday. She got killed on Monday driving to school. Witnesses said from behind she had her head down. There was a curve in the road.

The road broke to the right. It wasn't a sharp turn. The speed limit was still 55. It dropped to 35 down the road a ways. It was 55 in that area. The
young lady had her head down. She had a passenger. I'll guarantee you they were fooling with the radio.

I want this station. No, I want that station. She didn't swerve left. The road broke gradually to the right. She went straight, hit a truck head-on. If she wouldn't have had the passenger, more than likely she would have had the radio station set to the station she wanted.

Had she managed to survive or had that accident not happened, who knows, she becomes a doctor, cure AIDS, whatever. Everything she was, everything she was going to be, gone just like that. I'd like to see an incentive to take driver education. Right now we're saying if you don't have driver education, you get your license in 6 months.

I would like to say if you take the approved driver education course, which is 30 hours of theory and 6 hours of driving, maybe you can get your license within sight of 3 months, 4 months. This encourages the youngsters to learn the proper way. I don't have anything else unless someone has some questions.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much, Mark. Any members of the House have any questions? I think that you'll find that all of us are in agreement. And Deputy Secretary Serian is in the back. Betty, why don't you stand up so everybody can see who you are.

MS. SERIAN: Good afternoon. Thank you. CHAIRPERSON GEIST: If your license is late, registration, anything like that, see Betty.

MS. SERIAN: Absolutely.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I think we all recognize -- and I've looked over and over this. We agree with you that there should be incentives for taking driver's education. I'm a firm advocate and believer in the fact that the curriculum for driver's education needs to be completely revamped.

And I think that that curriculum should be developed and supervised and audited by PennDOT. And I really firmly believe that that should be paid for under liquid fuels money. And this Committee -- and over and over again, you're going to hear all of us saying there's nobody, nobody on this Committee accepts the casualty losses that we have in Pennsylvania's highway and says that we're going to accept $X$ number of deaths and maimings in this area.

And I think that's one of the reasons why you're seeing this bill. And we want to thank you very much for coming up. Seeing no questions, we'll move on and --

> MR. HENNESY: Thank you.
> CHAIRPERSON GEIST: -- call our good friend

Art Glatfelter. [ know that Cheryl Hall is here.

MS. HALL: My understanding was he was on his way.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Is he going to get demerits for being late?

MS. HALL: I'll let you handle that.
CHAIRRPERSON GEIST: Steve Blackistone, State and Local Liaison Coordinator, National Transportation Safety Board.

MR. BLACKISTONE: Thank you, Chairman Geist. And good afternoor, Committee members. It's a pleasure for me to be here in Farrisburg today to try and give you a little bit of a national perspective regarding graduated driver licensing, both the problem of teenage crashes and what's happening in states around the country.

For those of you that are not familiar, the National Transportation -- oh, there is a written statement which $I$ believe is being handed out, and $I$ will summarize it rather than read it. For those of you that are not familiar with the National Transportation Safety Board, we are the federal agency that investigates major transportation crashes.

You know us mostly for our investigation of aviation accidents such as the US Air Crash in Pittsburgh that the board will be making a final determination of
probable cause later this month on. We also investigate accidents in other modes of transportation, rail, highway, marine and hazardous materials.

And we have investigated a number of accidents involving young drivers of the very type that you're trying to address today. The result of our investigations and recommendations and the recommendations that arise from our investigations are our most important product.

We do not have any regulatory authority, and we do not have any grant money to either hand out or withhold, as the case may be. We leave that to the US Department of Transportation. Unfortunately, we hear all too often reports of car crashes involving young drivers.

And indeed, as was mentioned previously, we've just recently seen very tragic crashes both in the Philadelphia and the Pittsburgh areas where a number of teenagers were killed in a car crash involving newly-licensed drivers.

Crash rates for 16 -year-olds are indeed a cause for alarm. Their rate is by far the highest in the nation followed by 17-year-olds. In my written statement, there are a number of statistics. But 16-year-olds have a rate about four times that of adult drivers.

You've heard some statistics. Let me share a few others from the national perspective. In 1997, there
were about 8,900 people killed in crashes nationwide involving 15- to 20-year-old drivers. Those drivers make up about 6.7 percent of the driving population, but they have about 14 percent of the fatalities.

Traffic crashes account for about 40 percent of all deaths among 15- to 20-year-olds, by far the leading cause of death among this age group. In 1997, here in Pennsylvania, 298 persons were killed in highway crashes involving these young drivers. That was more than 19 percent of the total number of highway deaths in Pennsylvania that year.

Clearly, these statistics demonstrate that these crashes are a serious problem. And it's a problem that will only get. worse over the next 10 years. There is a table attached to the testimony that you have before you that shows population trends among teenagers.

And for the next 10 years, we expect to see a significant increase in the number of teenagers. That's going to lead to more drivers and more crashes and unfortunately more fatalities if there's no intervention.

There's certain characteristics of these crashes that are fairly common. Typically, the drivers and passengers are not belted; the cars have usually a larger number of passengers; they're loaded with the driver's peers; and there's a combination of inexperience and
immaturity that's unique among the driving population. As a result of all these factors, in 1993 the Safety Board recommended that Pennsylvania and other states enact a comprehensive provisional licensing system. And here in Pennsylvania, I would note you already have many -some parts of that system.

As you'll see from the maps that are attached to my testimony, Pennsylvania does have a partial licensing system now. But the problem is that our current system doesn't teach young people how to drive so much as it teaches them how to pass a test.

Learning to drive is a long-term experience that can only be clone with on-the-job experience. Only by expending extensive amounts of time on the road do we learn how to perceive risks, identify them ahead of time, and respond to them.

Only through experience do we learn the maturity that enables us to prevent accidents. And oftentimes, the accidents may not be the driver's fault but may be something that the teenager could have prevented.

Let me cite one example of a crash that we're investigating that occurred just outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico. A carload of teenagers was on their way from an early morning bible study to school. They were driving headed east on an interstate highway driving into the sun.

But they were driving at about 25 or 30 miles an hour, for reasons we have not yet been able to determine, on an interstate highway.

A tractor trailer came up behind them going 65 or 70 , the speed Limit, and wasn't able to see them because of the sun in his eyes, overran these -- there was two cars full of teenagers. -- overran both cars, hitting them from the rear and killing several of the people and injuring several more.

In this case, the crash wasn't the teenagers' fault technically. The driver from the rear was at fault, but they didn't recognize the risks that they created by driving so slowly into the sun on an interstate highway. That's the kind of thing that is very difficult to teach in a class but only is learned through experience.

There are a number of studies cited in my testimony regarding the effectiveness of graduated licensing, and I'll leave them there except to just mention the most recent study completed by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety which looked at Florida's 1996 graduated law.

It found a 9 percent reduction in fatal and injury crashes among 15-, 16- and 17-year-olds, whereas it did not find a comparable reduction among 18-year-olds in Florida. It also looked at young drivers in Georgia as a
comparison state, and it did not find any similar reduction there.

The time has come, I think, for Pennsylvania to enact a comprehensive driver licensing system. The bill before you includes a six-month waiting period which is important. It strengthens the nighttime driving restriction, includes a minimum adult supervised driving requirement and many of the other provisions that are recommended in the Uniform Vehicle Code.

These crashes are going to remain a problem unless steps are taken. Too many kids are being killed and injured already. And the Safety Board believes it's time for Pennsylvania to act. This is so important to the Board that it's been macle one of our 10 most wanted recommendations, and we believe it's one of the most effective actions that you can take to save the lives of our teenagers and others who are involved in these crashes.

As a final note, I might add that this is particularly a personal priority of our Chairman, Jim Hall, who is both the parent of teenagers and a former state official from Tennessee and something that he is very personally interested in and I'm sure would be glad to discuss with any of you if you felt it appropriate.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I'll be glad to respond to any questions that you might
have.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Yeah, I have a couple. Thank you. When we were working with Carnegie-Mellon this past year, one of the things that impressed me the most about the microchip coming into this area of teaching was being able to use a simulator, an artificial intelligence simulator, to squeeze 20 years of driving experience into the simulator for police officers just as they can do the same for the aircraft pilots and eventually very soon for the truck drivers for the big companies.

The aim of this Committee and this education process is to squeeze as many years of driving experience as we can into a young driver so that they become responsible. And in doing that, one of the elements that we think that would really help us out and be beneficial to us is if we had more national dollars that came out of the Highway Act that were aimed at developing the whole teaching process.

And that's something like Smart Highway. We have tremendous amount of monies that have been allocated to Smart Highway and things like that. And this just isn't a Pennsylvania program. This is something that has universal appeal all over North America. So I think what I'm trying to tell you there is that we really agree with you.

My other question is what would you feel would be the advantage --- and we want to stimulate kids to take as much driver ed. as possible. -- is if we change the requirement from 6 months for nontrained people to four months for those who take an intensive driver education course and on top of that, to offer the same as in European countries where we tell kids who are out of the system, not in school, who choose not to and want to come back in then and take it, we charge them a fee?

I know in Germany, I think it's $\$ 4,500$ if a kid wants to come back in that system and get the benefit of that education.

MR. BLACKISTONE: Just one -- two comments about that. First, the Board has not made any specific recommendations regarding graduated -- or I'm sorry. -regarding driver education. So I don't -- can't give you a specific answer as to what would be the effect of reducing the period from 6 months to 4 months.

We're not aware of any studies that have shown one way or another whether that would have any effect on crashes. But the key is to make sure that they have an extended period of time. And the Uniform Vehicle Code and the traffic safety community in general recommend 6 months as the period of time, minimum period of time that's necessary to -- to provide the on-the-road experience
that's necessary.
One other aside comment is the European countries have much stronger licensing requirements than do any of the states here, including, as you mentioned, much higher both insurance fees and licensing and training fees.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: And they also offer many more rewards if you take the education.

MR. BLLACKISTONE: Yes.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: It's just not punishing somebody with a club.

MR. BLACKISTONE: Correct.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: So we're heading in that direction with a lot of the help of a lot of the folks in this room. Any questions from the House members? Joe.

REPRISSENTATIVE BATTISTO: Mr. Blackistone, the De Kalb -- I think the De Kalb County, Georgia, that study sort of in a sense says that driver education is sort of not worth the investment put into it. It doesn't say that word for word, but it almost implies that. Do you believe that to be true of: --

MR. BLACKISTONE: Well, as a previous witness mentioned, the problem with many of the studies that have been done is trying to normalize for exposure data to -and that may have been one of the problems there. As I said previously, the Board is not aware of any studies that
have shown a conclusive reduction in crashes involved -- as a result of driver education.

REPRJSENTATIVE BATTISTO: Thank you. CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Markosek. REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on one of your graphs, the second graph that you have --

MR. BLACKISTONE: Yes.
REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: -- included here, the fatalities involving drivers age 15 to 20.

MR. BLACKISTONE: Fifteen to 20, uh-huh.
REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: And back in 1991
when this graph started, it was pretty high. Then you have a precipitous drop-off that has trended up since that time, but it's still significantly lower than back then. What -what would you attribute was the reason for the drop-off, and why aren't we as high as we used to be?

MR. BLACKISTONE: We wondered about that ourselves when we saw that. There are a couple of -- and we weren't able to do any in-depth research to try and identify it. There are a couple of things that may have happened.

One is, that was the period during which many states were strengthening their minimum drinking age laws, properly adopting zero tolerance for youth. I don't know
when that was done here in Pennsylvania. But both the change in the law and the intended publicity that went with it certainly in many states led to a reduction -- a short-term reduction in fatalities.

But no, we weren't able to identify it. And we don't know -- since we didn't have data on previous years, we don't know if maybe 1991 was just a one-year spite for some reason. It could have -- there are many things that affect fatality numbers. For example, it has often been suggested that the state of the economy has an effect on gross levels of traffic fatalities.

REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Would you have the -- the data that would be pre-1991?

MR. BLACKISTONE: We can ask NHTSA for that.
This data is based on the fatality analysis reporting system that is the definitive statistics.

REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Well, I was just wondering what the trend was. Is 1991 the anomaly here or is -- was there something -- you know, was that the norm until that time and --

MR. BLACKISTONE: Let -- let us get the data for you, and we'll take a look and see. As I said, we only have the data back to 1991.

REPRESENTATIVE MARKOSEK: Okay. Thank you.
CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Representative

Hess.
REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two quick questions and your opinion on both. The responsibility of the driver to see that the rest of the passengers do buckle up, as I looked at the chart there, I see a number of the passengers where we have teenage drivers are being killed.

Do you see that the responsibility of the driver -- your opinion on that -- to see that the rest of those in the car would buckle up?

MR. BLACKISTONE: The Board has not made any specific recommendations with regard to -- to that level of detail. But our feeling is that you need to adopt as strong as possible mandatory safety belt use law. Certainly, the driver is in the best position to see to it that others do it because he is, in essence, the captain of the ship and he is the one who's able to refrain from driving until others do put their belts on.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Buckle up before we go. That's it?

MR. BLACKISTONE: Exactly. REPRESENTATIVE HESS: And as a follow-up, another question. Do you favor a mandatory driver's education through the schools?

MR. BLACKISTONE: The Safety Board has not
made any recommendations regarding whether driver -- driver education should be required nor how it should be implemented between schools or Department of Transportation.

I heard the earlier exchange. And unfortunately, we really don't have any evidence one way or another as to how that affects crashes.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Just one follow-up
question. And Chairman Geist mentioned about funding from the federal government. Would you foresee any funding that could be obtained from the federal government to do driver's education to the schools? Percentage --

MR. EBLACKISTONE: TO --
REPRESENTATIVE HESS: -- coming from the federal government. that would come to the schools if the schools were to implement a mandatory education program through the Department of Education.

MR. BLACKISTONE: I'm not aware that there are any specific federal programs for that. As I said, our agency does not do any fund -- have any funding programs at all. That's something you need to talk either to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration or US Department of Education.

But I'm not aware that they have any. What might be available is funds to do test-type programs,
demonstration projects. And in fact, this is an area that the Board has recommended that it puts money into it to develop, if you will, an advanced driver ed. course that addresses areas like risk perception and avoidance.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: In other words, you're not aware of any funding stream that would be available?

MR. BLACKISTONE: No, I'm not. Again, I'll be glad to do some research and see if $I$ can find any.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Fine. Thank you.
CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Steve, thank you very much for giving your testimony. I'd like to call Art Glatfelter next. Now, Art is a transportation writer and in his spare time runs a big insurance company called Glatfelter Insurance. And we'd like to call Art to the table now.

MR. GLATFELTER: Thank you very much. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to come before you to speak on the subject of graduated licensing. If $I$ do not speak loud enough, please holler. I am Arthur Glatfelter, Chairman of the Board and CEO of the Glatfelter Insurance Group in York County.

I am pleased to be representing the independent insurance agents of Pennsylvania. I have been a licensed insurance agent for 51 years and a licensed operator for 58 years with more than 2 million miles of driving experience.

I am interested in this subject because I care about young people and believe that my generation and several generations before and following mine have done and are doing a very poor job of preparing young people for the very cruel world they will be inheriting.

When I was a child and in my early years in the insurance business, I felt that our society as a whole truly practiced common courtesy in their relationship with one another. It should be obvious to everyone who has to spend much time on our highways today that common courtesy is almost nonexistent and even looked upon as a weakness of one's character.

We are being brainwashed with propaganda to attempt to have us believe that speed is the cause of nearly every accident on our highways. I submit to you that speed in and of itself rarely causes vehicle accidents. It obviously has a great deal to do with the severity of every accident, but it is not the primary cause.

What then is the cause? Poor driving skills and driving habits, arrogance and lack of courtesy, and disregard for traffic laws. As I stated in my previous testimony on April 13th, 1998, throughout the history of this universe, each generation acquired knowledge and habits, both good and bad, from previous generations.

The young people learn most of their habits, both good and bad, from their parents and today a great deal from viewing the intelligent programming on TV. They can view dozens of high speed chases and fancy vehicle maneuvers every week on TV, which I believe has a decided effect on the way young people drive vehicles.

I also stated in my previous testimony that $I$ sincerely feel that a great percentage of parents are the least qualified to teach their children to drive and actually have passed on many bad driving habits. What these young people need is not less driver training but much more; however, not from parents but from professionals who will not make excuses for them as $I$ have heard hundreds of times during my career.

I can also tell you from 50 years of insurance experience that regardless of age, the first year of new operators driving, the accident rate is extremely high. Why? Because they lack the experience and self-confidence to operate a vehicle on our crowded highways where common courtesy is virtually nonexistent.

If we care about these young drivers, we should enhance the driver training, not diminish it. I have never had anyone tell me they are a poor driver, but I have had many fathers and mothers tell me how their son or daughter had an unavoidable accident.

If we truly care about these young people, we must do much more to prepare them before we expose them to the madness that we all witness day after day on our highways, as $I$ just witnessed coming to Harrisburg in the last half hour.

We should begin in their very early years to teach them the practice of common courtesy, which they obviously are not being taught in many homes, and long before they are old enough to drive a vehicle. We should give them much more classroom and actual highway driving before we expose them to the multitude of challenges they will face daily on our poorly designed and signed and crowded highways.

I was privileged to have served on the ad hoc committee who advcicated the proposed three-tier driver licensing system, and $I$ am pleased with the content of House Bill 10 and Senate Bill 410 with the exception that there was no indication of any attempt to strengthen driver education.

My experience tells me that it is the most important element of an attempt to reduce the number of accidents on our highways because as $I$ have said previously, it is the lack of driving skills and an aggressive attitude that account for $90-\mathrm{plus}$ percent of all vehicle accidents.
of us who use our highways, it is essential that we make a serious effort to enhance the driving skills and habits of all licensed drivers. However, I do not feel we should place another unfunded burden on our school systems or the general public in the way of additional taxes.

The person seeking a driver's license, just as it is for those seeking a hunting license, should pay the cost of this education. And yes, the need is far greater. A onetime adequate fee for this education is a small price to pay but I believe over time will pay very great dividends. Respectfully submitted.

CHAIFPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much, Art. We want to thank you for all of the work and time that you've put in over the years on this issue. And I think the General Assembly of Pennsylvania is finally getting to where you've been for years.

At this time, I'd like to call Representative Hess who has a question.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Glatfelter, just one question. You had mentioned in your testimony about the high number of accidents of those who had their first year of license. Do you have any figures or statistics on that?

MR. GLATFELTER: I'm sorry. Any?

REPRISSENTATIVE HESS: Any figures or
statistics on the number of accidents --
MR. GLATFELTER: No, I just --
REPRESENTATIVE HESS: -- of a teenager in their first year of license?

MR. GLATFELTER: I just have 52 years of my own experience. And I can tell you that over the years, people, whether they're 16,26 or 36 , if we get them through their first year without at least a fender bender, it's a miracle.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you very much.
Representative Melio.
REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Are the -- any insurance companies give a reduction in the insurance rate when children or new drivers have driver education? Is there any -- any amount of time if you get the driver's education? How does that work?

MR. GLATFELTER: I'm not sure I heard the last part. But I think the insurance industry started out years ago because they are great followers. I don't believe they have any really statistics on the subject at all. But I -that doesn't mean it isn't a good idea.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: No. It encourages a lot of people to take the driver education so they get a
reduction in thei. insurance rate.
MR. GLATFELTER: Yeah, right.
REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: But I wondered if there was any -- on the insurance part, is there any certain hours they have to do that?

MR. GLATFELTER: In all my years, I have never seen a report like that.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: You're telling me if they have driver's education, they get a reduction?

MR. GLATFELTER: That's it. That's what's called competition.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Allen -- Mark Hennesy.
MR. HENNESY: I believe what the gentleman is asking is, Do you have to take driver education for a certain period of time? And you have to have 30 hours of classroom and 6 hours of driving in order to qualify for the insurance discount, if that's your question.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Yeah, that's my question.

MR. HENNESY: Yes. Thirty hours of classroom and a minimum of 6 hours of driving.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Okay. Then I just want to follow up on that. Do you think 30 hours is enough time, or do you think there should be more than 30 hours?

MR. HENNESY: Well, I think probably more driving. Classroom, you can cover quite a bit in 30 hours. Driving 6 hours is -- boy, you can't hardly learn to do anything in 6 hours.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: And I noticed in some classrooms that I have been in, they have these monitors where you're like driving on the road. Is that -- is that what you do in your classroom?

MR. HENNESY: No, no. I'm not big on let's watch -- at least from what most of them have. -- let's watch a TV screen and pretend we're driving. It's a lot better to actually get out and drive the car. The classroom part just goes over the rules of the road, shows some films on what to do, how to do it.

It gives the students the basic idea. But you actually have to go out and get on the road and do it.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Thank you, Mr.
Chairman.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Laughlin. MR. GLATFELTER: Could I add to that?

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Excuse me. Go ahead, Art. MR. GLATFELTER: Six hours of driving experience behind the wheel is not enough to teach anybody much. I don't think you learn to ride a bicycle in 6 hours. You don't learn much of anything in 6 hours. And
none of it is hazardous as this.
You can't be -- you can't become comfortable enough behind the wheel of a car in 60 hours to really be out on these highways today. And I think that the more experience we get from behind the wheel -- and not on a parking lot but out on the highway -- they ought to have a fair amount of parking lot first.

And [ would like -- I would've liked to have proposed that a long time ago. But I think we need much, much more than 6 hours of driving time.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Representative Laughlin.

REPRESENTATIVE LAUGHLIN: Yes, I agree with you when you say that arrogance and a lack of courtesy is what causes many of the problems. I remember whenever I was going through driver training when $I$ was 16 in school -- and we had a fantastic teacher.

He kept a pair of boxing gloves on the visor there. And if you made a mistake, you know, you would get a punch but -- it was a public school. But do you have any statistics on what age group is the safest drivers?

MR. GLLATFELTER: From about 27 to 45. It certainly isn't the 21 to 26 .

REPRESENTATIVE LAUGHLIN: That's when they become mature then, huh?

MR. GLATFELTER: And then they have their own automobiles and a lot of -- a lot of time and a little money on their hands I guess. I have -- I have a lot of statistics on that from every age from 16 to 65 that I could share with you.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Art, thank you very, very much. We're going to call our last young man, Brian Trueblood. And while we're doing that, is Judy Stish in the room? How about Pat Rhoads? I'd like to thank you very, very much for putting this whole thing together for today and tomorrow and let you know how much we really appreciate it. Brian, this is a tough bunch now.

MR. TRUEBLOOD: Yeah.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I hope you're up for this task.

MR. TRUEBLOOD: I'll be fine.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: All right. If you can summarize for us, we would -- it's all yours.

MR. TRUEBLOOD: All right. Chairman Geist, Honorable Members and distinguished guests, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Brian Trueblood. I'm 17 years old and a junior at Baldwin High School located in Pittsburgh. I'm currently learning how to drive.

> Today you've already heard from
representatives from the Traffic Safety Commission, a driving school, insurance companies, and the National Transportation Board. In these next few moments, I, a teenager with a learner's permit, would like to present my views on the proposed legislation in the presented bill, House -- House Bill 10.

I'd Like to begin my testimony with a discussion of the 50 hours of driving time and 6-month waiting period for obtaining a junior license as proposed in House Bill 10. I recommend 60 hours of documented time and driver test availability after 60 days versus the 50 hours and 6 months.

I further propose 10 of these 60 hours be required night driving. The current bill doesn't stipulate minimum nighttime driving requirements. Night driving is more difficult to learn as the young driver needs to learn how to drive with a significant decrease in visibility and the glare of oncoming headlights.

Decreasing the limit from 6 months to 60 days for taking the driver's exam is a more realistic time frame. Six months of a wait upon -- 6 months of a wait infringes upon the availability of applying for employment, especially during a time when teens are trying to earn money for college tuition.

This 6-month moratorium punishes the young
responsible driver. In many families today, both the parents work. The availability of having a parent home each day after school to accompany the junior licensee to work and after school activities has decreased throughout the United States.

Another example in support of the 60-day minimum would be teen drivers living on farms. Having to wait 6 months for a license could be detrimental to the family farm and other family businesses. For farmers, 6 months is longer than most growing seasons. The farmer needs helping hands as soon as possible.

A minimum 60-day requirement is a much more reasonable time frame. If the goal is driving experience behind the wheel, whether it's 60 hours in 60 days minimum or 60 hours in 6 months, it's still 60 hours of driving experience that counts. So $I$ believe we need restrictions on junior drivers, but these restrictions need to be reasonable and judicious.

The next proposed restrictions regarding excessive speeding or accumulation of 6 or more points as stated in the bill, that's not $I$ feel strict enough. At a time when drivers are most impressionable, a stiffer penalty requiring more than 90 days suspension would have a greater impact on the junior driver.

I propose a 150 -day suspension and a $\$ 250$ fine
for the first conviction, with every subsequent suspension being for 6 months. A greater suspension time coupled with a financial penalty $I$ believe would go far in deterring the joyriding antics of young drivers.

If the initial consequences are not perceived as severe and restrictive, I believe there would be a tendency for young drivers to take the risk to drive irresponsibly. Furthermore, I support the bill signed by Governor Ridge that holds accountable drivers, who have driving convictions in other states, being held accountable for their actions and would face restrictions on their Pennsylvania license.

An important omission House Bill 10 doesn't cover is the restriction of the number of passengers riding with a young newly-licensed driver. In the Post Gazette dated November 18th, 1998, Jim Hall, Chairman of the National Transportation and Safety Board states that one of the characteristics of fatal crashes involving novice drivers is having a car loaded with peers.

A frightening statistic shows that two-thirds of the deaths of teenagers as passengers in cars occur in vehicles driven by teenage drivers. I would strongly suggest that this bill include restrictions on the number of passengers that beginning drivers can transport.

My recommendation would limit the junior
license holder to having, say, three passengers in the vehicle while driving. My point being that most vehicles have seat belts for at least four passengers, and seat belts are shown to increase the survivability rate of the passengers when involved in an accident.

Additionally, too many teenagers -- or too many passengers can become a distraction to the driver. And I also believe that more passengers proportionally increases the amount of peer pressure to show off or take risks at the wheel.

The proposed bill as written requires the junior licensee to have someone 21 years or older to be in the car with the driver. Not everyone over 21 years of age is qualified to teach or may have a good driving record. Individuals such as those married and between the ages of 18 to 21 are eligible to own property, sign contracts and have children.

However, under this bill, they would not be permitted to teach someone to drive a car. At 17, you can join the military and defend our country. At 18, you possess the most important right, and that's the right to vote. If we are responsible enough to vote and elect individuals such as yourselves to make our laws and uphold our Constitution, an 18-year-old should be judged responsible to assist someone learning how to drive.

We must remember that an 18 -year-old wants to arrive home alive just as much as the 21 -year-old. The 18-year-old would not put themselves or the driver at risk any more than a 2l-year-old would.

Although not addressed in the bill is the issue of driver education classes. There appears to be two opposing views regarding the benefits of formal driving education courses. In my research, I read Representative DeLuca and Representative Bunt's belief that the Commonwealth should require driver's education classes which would be paid for by the teenager.

However, according to the Easton Express Times, January 17th, 1999, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's own report states that the driver's education does not affect the safety performance of the teenage driver. The article further states that the researchers found that those completing the courses became overconfident and this led to more crashes.

Based on this information, I am against mandatory driver's education. Although it is an added benefit to learning how to drive with a professional instructor, I feel that the education courses should be taken at the discretion of the driver and their family.

And in summary, I agree that a graduated driver's licensing program be instituted in Pennsylvania.

Allan Williams from the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety, in an article from the Hanover Sun dated January 21st of this year, has shown that programs like that in Florida show crash reductions can be achieved with a comprehensive graduated licensing system.

However, unlike his recommended program, I would strongly recommend the following: That the junior license should have a minimum of 50 hours of daylight driving, accompanied with a minimum of 10 hours of nighttime driving; and a junior driver would not be eligible for testing for a minimum of 60 days after the acceptance of the learner's permit; there should be a three-passenger limit for the junior driver; and violations as determined in House Bill 10 should require a stiffer penalty, such as at 150-day suspension and a $\$ 250$ fine for the first conviction; the driving instructor's minimum age I think should remain at 18.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for your attention and the opportunity to present my views. If you have any questions, I will do my best to answer them at this time. CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Brian, I think you did a fantastic job.

MR. TRUEBLOOD: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: What high school do you
attend?
MR. 'TRUEBLOOD: Baldwin High School. It's located in Pittsburgh.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: I know Baldwin. In the City of Pittsburgh, what opportunities do you have as a student to take driver's education; and how hard is it to fit it in with your curriculum?

MR. TRUUEBLOOD: The high school I think offers a course on driver's education in the class. It's not actually going out and driving. It's just a classroom discussion. I personally don't think I could take a driver's education course outside of school or anything like that because I'm involved in other activities, and I don't really feel that $I$ have time for -- time for that.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Battisto has a question.

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Brian, I just want to say that I'm very impressed by your very coherent presentation by the way.

MR. T'RUEBLOOD: Thank you.
REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: You say you're a junior in high school or a senior?

MR. TRUEBLOOD: I'm a junior.
REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Junior. You write quite well.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Would you be interested in running for Representative Maher's seat?

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Just a couple of things. I inferred from your testimony that -- a couple of things stick out. Number one, the need for more instruction and especially at night. That sounds to be fairly convincing. And also the number of individuals in the automobile that is not covered in House Bill 10.

Did you say that because you know, Brian, that you hear friends of yours say, you know, let's get together, let's go for a ride and you sort of gather that people show off in front of each other and the more you have in the car, the more showing off? Is that --

MR. TRUEBLOOD: Yes, I agree with that statement. I think that when you have a whole bunch of teenagers in a car together --

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: The hormone level rises.
MR. TRUEBLOOD: What's that?
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: The hormone level rises.
MR. TRUEBLOOD: Yes, possibly. They have a tendency to goof off I think. Most teenagers do.

REPRESENTATIVE BATTISTO: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Hess.
REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Brian, just one
question. The fee that you pay for the permit today is $\$ 5$, which that fee has not been increased or -- I'm not going to -- in a long, long time. Would you feel that an increment in the fee would be a deterrent to the teenager? Do you think that would be a hardship if the fee was raised?

MR. TRUEBLOOD: No. I think teenagers would -- would want their license whether they had to pay $\$ 5$ or \$50. They're still going to raise enough money through a job or from their parents or anything to get a learner's permit and driving license.

REPRESENTATIVE HESS: Yeah. That -- that \$5 fee goes for education and goes back to the school district so that people -- the Department does not get the $\$ 5$. It goes to the Department of Education, then it goes back to the school distric:t for driver's education. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Dennis Leh.
REPRESENTATIVE LEH: Yes. Thank You, Mr. Chairman. Brian, this question is not for you; although, you did raise this issue. And this question, I'm going to put it out for anybody. Brian brought up the issue of when you're 17 you can join the United States Military.

What's the policy now in the military with regard to driver's license? When $I$ was in 35 years ago, $I$ forget what it was. But what is it now; in other words, if
you have a license now --
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: General Pippy can answer that question. John.

REPRESENTATIVE PIPPY: Actually,
Representative Leh, I can tell you very quickly. In the military, you need your -- my branch was the Army. And as a matter of fact, at 17 I was at West Point in the military.

You do need your local state driver's license or the driver's license of whatever state you're in. But in order to drive the military vehicles, they have their own training program which is specific to the military.

REPRESENTATIVE LEH: And that would supercede state law. So if you're in the military driving a state -I mean driving a military vehicle, you would be allowed on the state highways. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Brian.

REPRISENTATIVE PIPPY: Under orders.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Melio.
REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Yeah. Excellent testimony, Brian. Betty Serian, did the Department do a study on education, the driver education? I noticed Brian reads a lot of newspapers and quoted some newspapers.

MS. SERIAN: Did PennDOT do a study? No, we have not. But we have relied on many other very credible
and valuable studies, not just the De Kalb study but the Insurance Institute study, as well as the most recent John Hopkins study.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: And did that PennDOT study say that it wasn't effective to driver education?

MS. SERIAN: We have found that it does not impact the crash rate in a positive way. That means it does not reduce accidents.

REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Could we have a copy of that report?

MS. SERIAN: We can give you a copy of all of those studies. And we'll be happy to bring those tomorrow. REPRESENTATIVE MELIO: Thank You, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Representative Pippy will ask the last question of the day before we recess this hearing.

REPRESENTATIVE PIPPY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you not putting any pressure on me as far as time goes. First, Brian, I represent Moon Township in the western part of the county so I'm very proud and happy to see that you're up here testifying on behalf of some 17-year-olds.

One of the questions I had and my concern -and the Chairman brought it up earlier. -- is the -- I know
there are companies out there right now that are pursuing the thoughts of having the simulated training literally -I know the larger trucking companies all have it. -- but at the individual level where you could literally drive a trailer up to a school, participate in the driver's education program and drive that trailer to the next school.

And you said earlier you didn't have time. Is that something that would be interesting to you, understanding you would be in the same type of a computer-simulated situation that $I$ had when $I$ was in the tank or that an Air Force pilot would have when they're in a plane? You would be put through these different strenuous, hopefully, or stressful situations instead of being told about them.

Actually, you'd have the vehicle come up in front of you or the person walk in front of you. Is that something you would find interesting as a 17-year-old?

MR. TRUEBLOOD: Yes. I think that a computer simulation of driving would be a lot more interesting than the classroom lecturing, reading books about different situations and things of that sort.

REPRESENTATIVE PIPPY: Thank You, Mr.
Chairman.
CHAIRPERSON GEIST: Thank you. Thank you,


I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me during the hearing of the within cause and that this is a true and correct transcript of the same.


Registered Professional Reporter

My Commission Expires:
April 30, 2001

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Pottsville, Pennsylvania 17901

March 8, 1999
CondenscIt ${ }^{\text {TM }}$ \$250 - automobile


March 8, 1999


March 8, 1999 CondenseIt ${ }^{\text {TM }}$
coupled - example


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