

Resolution for Support of North Carolina's Proposed Primary Enforcement of Rear Seat Belt Law

WHEREAS, in 2017, there were 304,792 reported motor vehicle crashes on North Carolina's highways that resulted in 1,396 persons killed and 127,975 persons injured;

WHEREAS, in North Carolina, seat belt laws are primary for drivers and front seat passengers and secondary for rear seat passengers (1);

WHEREAS, in 2017, North Carolina's seat belt usage rate was 91.4% for drivers and front seat passengers, just slightly above the national use rate of 90.9% in states with primary enforcement laws (2);

WHEREAS, in 2017, 42% of all occupant fatalities in North Carolina were unrestrained;

WHEREAS, in 2017, 41% of the drivers and front seat passenger fatalities in North Carolina were unrestrained;

WHEREAS, in 2017, 47% of the rear seat passenger fatalities in North Carolina were unrestrained;

WHEREAS, seat belt use continued to be higher in the States in which vehicle occupants can be pulled over solely for not using seat belts ("primary law States") as compared with the States with weaker enforcement laws ("secondary law States") or without seat belt laws (2);

WHEREAS, strengthening North Carolina's current seat belt laws is consistent with the mission of the Executive Committee for Highway Safety; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Executive Committee for Highway Safety unanimously and strongly supports revising North Carolina General Statute §20-135.2A to include: 1) Mandating safety belt usage for **all** seating positions in a vehicle, 2) Failure of a rear seat occupant to wear a seat belt should be justification to stop a vehicle and 3) Increasing fines for non-compliance from \$10 per violation to \$25 per violation for unrestrained back seat passengers.

APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY
May 11, 2018

- (1) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Buckle Up: Restraint Use in North Carolina*. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/pdf/seatbelts/restraint_use_in_nc.pdf
- (2) U.S. Department of Transportation. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Seat Belt Use in 2017-Overall Results*. DOT HS 812 465. April 2018 (revised).

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