

# Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS)

## Virtual Meeting Minutes

### January 14, 2022

#### **Location:**

Microsoft Team Meeting @ 10:00 a.m.

**In Attendance:** Tracy Anderson, Isaac Avery, Frank Baumgartner, Angela Berry, Julia Casadonte, Stacy Deans, Anne Dickerson, Mark Ezzell, Greg Ferrara, Daniel Finley, Arthur Goodwin, Tony Hayes, Stephen Heiny, Brad Hibbs, Heather Hildebrandt, Freddy Johnson, Elyse Keefe, Wesley Kumfer, Kevin Lacy, Seth LaJeunesse, Cheryl Leonard, Chris Lukasina, Portia Manley, Jon McCormick, Michael Messer, Sarah O'Brien, Chris Oliver, Edward Parker, David Phipps, Johanna Reese, Lisa Riegel, Laura Sandt, Julie Seibert, Raghavan Srinivasan, Emily Stupka, Shawn Troy

#### **Call to Order and Introductions**

#### **Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update**

Mr. Chris Oliver provided an update on our state's fatal and serious injury trends ([\*Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update pdf\*](#)). Mr. Oliver noted that our preliminary 2021 fatalities are higher than the 2020 fatalities and have surpassed the previous 2007 modern record high mark. For additional historical reference, the preliminary 2021 fatalities are now higher than any year since 1973. Our older driver crash fatalities are up approximately 32% from 2020 to 2021. Similarly, our older driver crash serious injuries are also up approximately 28% from 2020 to 2021. Additional information on our statewide crash fatality and serious injury trends is available in the presentation materials.

#### **Equity in Traffic Safety Enforcement**

Mr. Frank Baumgartner presented information on Equity in Traffic Safety Enforcement ([\*Equity in Traffic Safety Enforcement pdf\*](#)). Mr. Baumgartner discussed the idea that most traffic stops are done to keep roads safe by reducing crashes and for usage of the traffic/vehicle codes, which provide hundreds of potential violations, as a way to conduct informal criminal investigations. Based on the review of North Carolina SBI-122 Traffic Stop Report forms from 2002 to 2020, trends have shown a 50-50 split between safety and investigatory purposes from 1 to 1.7 million traffic stops per year. Additional traffic stop research information is available in the presentation materials.

#### **GHSA Equity in Highway Safety Enforcement and Engagement Programs**

Mr. Mark Ezzell discussed the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) Recommendations to Advance Equity in Highway Safety Enforcement and Engagement Programs ([\*GHSA Equity in Highway Safety pdf\*](#)). With the help of Governor Highway Safety Administrators throughout the country, the GHSA has provided ten recommendations that offer layers of protection for advancing equity in highway safety. Mr. Ezzell noted that North Carolina was the first state to develop a database to collect racial profiling data for every traffic stop. One of the recommendations that has been discussed by the ECHS and supported by the GHSA is the increased use of automated enforcement. All of the recommendations are available in the presentation materials.

## **Safe Systems and Kinetic Energy Management**

Mr. Wes Kumfer presented information on Safe Systems and Kinetic Energy Management ([Safe Systems and Kinetic Energy Management pdf](#)). Humans make mistakes while traveling on our roadways and the management of kinetic energy represents a way for engineers to implement the Safe Systems Approach. Safe Systems are designed to reduce or eliminate opportunities for crashes resulting in forces beyond human endurance. Mr. Kumfer noted that kinetic energy matters because higher impact speeds increase the chances of being killed if involved in a traffic crash. Therefore speed management practices such as altering roadway cross sections, traffic calming and speed safety cameras are a few of the major components that can be used to manage kinetic energy. Additional information on safe systems and kinetic energy management is available in the presentation materials.

## **Creating Safer Systems and Healthier Communities: Resource Hub**

Ms. Elyse Keefe provided an update on some of the Vision Zero Communities managing kinetic energy activities that are taking place in North Carolina ([Creating Safer Systems and Healthier Communities Resource Hub pdf](#)). Through the efforts of Vision Zero Greenville, the Greenville Public Works Department has installed five delineator systems at various locations to reduce the high number of crashes related to left-turning vehicles and/or two-way center left turn lanes since November 2018. The City of Charlotte Vision Zero continues to implement protected bike lanes and road diets at locations identified on their High Injury Network. Vision Zero Raleigh is also managing kinetic energy through the updating of their Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along four corridors. Additional tools and applications for strengthening safe systems can be found on the [Resource Hub website](#).

## **Potential Legislative Items**

Mr. Mark Ezzell led the discussion concerning potential legislative items the ECHS would like to consider during the forthcoming General Assembly Short Session. There was some discussion on the legislative extension to reduce our state's current Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) learner's permit period duration to 6 months. While a person must still complete a log detailing a minimum of 60 hours of driving time, research continues to show that the length of the permit period is more important than the number of hours driven. Ms. Johanna Reese pointed out that the extension was granted due to the severe backlog caused by the pandemic, but she does not anticipate a further need to extend the shortened learner's permit duration beyond the 2022 calendar year.

## **Future Meeting Dates**

- **May 6, 2022 @ 10:00 am**
- **September 2, 2022 @ 10:00 am** **Location (TBA)**
- **January 13, 2023 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**

*If there is a need to reschedule any meeting, we will let you know well in advance of the scheduled date.*

Meeting agendas, minutes and presentations are also available on the [ECHS website](#).