

Policy Resolution PR-4-19
Title: AASHTO Reauthorization Policy Theme 1: Promote Safety

Whereas, Ensuring safety of the public we serve remains the foremost priority for every state department of transportation;

Whereas, 36,750 lives lost on our roadways and work zones in 2018—including pedestrians and users of motorized and non-motorized vehicles— though a reduction from 2017, is wholly and totally unacceptable;

Whereas, AASHTO strongly supports the Toward Zero Deaths national vision of a highway system free of fatalities through a sustained and accelerated decline in transportation-related deaths and injuries;

Whereas, To make the most significant reductions in traffic fatalities and serious injuries, states combine efforts from multiple safety disciplines to implement the most effective countermeasures in the most efficient manner;

Whereas, This involves combining resources—such as funding and data—from various agencies with a role in traffic safety, including infrastructure, law enforcement, public education, emergency medical services, and public health; and

Whereas, Surface transportation reauthorization should allow for sharing and combining resources to allow states the necessary flexibility to address their safety challenges; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That states be allowed the flexibility to use a portion of the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to invest in safety programs such as behavioral efforts, public awareness, education, enforcement, research, improving system resilience, and pilot or experimental projects, and also allow HSIP funds to be used for experimental, temporary installations such as testing the viability of protected active transportation lanes (Issue SF-1);

Resolved, That deploy safely cooperative and automated transportation technologies by sharing non-proprietary data generated by automobile manufacturers, technology developers, research organizations, and public agencies with the public and decision makers; increasing efforts to deploy existing proven automation technologies, and; revising outdated safety laws, regulations, and guidance when the data unequivocally demonstrates a technology's ability to provide an equivalent or higher level of safety, while recognizing that the legislative and regulatory framework that reflects the mix of vehicle styles, ages, and technologies throughout the transition to new technologies should be kept in place (Issue CAV-2);

Resolved, That states be provided with a reasonable opportunity to take corrective action to bring themselves back in compliance with federal impaired driving requirements prior to the imposition of financial penalties to the state highway program (Issue SF-2);

Resolved, That Section 209 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 be clarified to exempt state and political subdivisions of states who sponsor but do not operate intercity passenger rail services from being classified as railroads or railroad carriers and thus subject to System Safety Program regulations intended for railroad operators (Issue RT-2);

Resolved, That the Federal Highway Administration continues to provide reviews and eligibility letters related to crash testing of roadside safety hardware for use on the nation's road and highway system while working with AASHTO on developing new performance specifications for determining crashworthiness

Resolved, That the current Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan exemption for Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 and 5311 providers be codified and provide funding to support implementation for systems receiving funding from the Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program and have 100 or fewer vehicles in peak revenue service (Issue PT-3).

Approved by the AASHTO Board of Directors
October 9, 2019