Increasing Pedestrian Fatalities: Contributing Factors and Promising Solutions

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About GHSA

- Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA)
- Represents state and territorial highway safety offices, tasked with addressing behavioral safety issues
  - Regulated by and funded through NHTSA
  - Approx. 50% are located within State DOTs (others in Public Safety, independent, or elsewhere in State gov’t)
  - Full list at: [www.ghsa.org/html/about/shsos.html](http://www.ghsa.org/html/about/shsos.html)
Overall Traffic Fatality Trends

People killed in Fatal Crashes, U.S.
Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State: 2017 Preliminary Data

- Released Feb. 29, 2018
- Authored by Richard Retting, of Sam Schwartz Transportation Consultants
Walking is Increasingly Popular

• Benefits to:
  – Health
  – Transportation
  – Economy
  – Environment
  – Transit
Increase in Pedestrian Fatalities

- Full-year projection based on preliminary data for first 6 months of 2017 from SHSOs

Pedestrian fatalities increased 27% from 2007-2016, while all other traffic deaths decreased by 14%.

Source: NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System
Projected Increase in Pedestrian Fatalities

Change in pedestrian fatalities: Jan-June 2016 vs. Jan-June 2017

- Increases in 23 states (and DC)
- Decreases in 20 states
- No change in 7 states

Source: GHSA

The estimated number of pedestrians killed in 2017 is 5,984.
In 2016, that number was 5,987.

ESSENTIALLY 2016 UNCHANGED 2017

Source: GHSA
Pedestrian Fatal Crash Data (FARS) with GHSA 2017 Estimate
Pedestrian Deaths as a Percent of Total Motor Vehicle Deaths

Figure 1
Pedestrian Deaths as a Percent of Total Motor Vehicle Deaths, 2007 - 2016

Source: FARS
Fatalities by Geography

• California, Florida, Texas, New York, and Arizona: 43 percent of all pedestrian deaths during the first six months of 2017.

• Arizona had highest rate (1.81) of pedestrian fatalities by 100,000 population by state.

• Virginia: 0.53 by 100,000 population

• Most pedestrian fatalities occur in urban areas.
Environmental Factors

Figure 5: 2016 Pedestrian Deaths in Relation to Location Type

- Travel Lanes: Non-Intersection Locations (e.g., midblock, highway) - 72%
- Intersections - 18%
- Non-Travel Lanes (e.g., shoulders, driveways) - 10%

Source: FARS
Broad Contributing Factors

• More walking (increased exposure)
• Weak pedestrian infrastructure
• Behavioral issues, including distracted driving
• Externalities:
  – Economic conditions
  – Demographics
  – Weather
  – Fuel prices
  – Amount of motor vehicle travel
Behavioral Factors

• Inattention
  – Drivers
  – Pedestrians

• Impairment
  – Drivers
  – Pedestrians
Countermeasures – Engineering

• Engineering & Enforcement
  – Increase separation of pedestrians from cars
  – Make pedestrians more visible
Countermeasures – Enforcement and Public Education

- Reduce speeds
- Public Education
### Pedestrian Countermeasures That Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedestrian Countermeasures</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian safety zones</td>
<td>★★★★★</td>
<td>$$$</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce and enforce speed limits</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Varies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conspicuity enhancement</td>
<td>★★★★</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforcement strategies</td>
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<td>Low</td>
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<td>Elementary-age child pedestrian training</td>
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<td>Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe Routes to School (SRTS)</td>
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<td>Child school bus training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications and Outreach Addressing Impaired Pedestrians</td>
<td>★★★</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other promising countermeasures

- Responsible beverage service
- Ride-service programs and ride-sharing services
Federal/SHSO Resources

- Section 402 grant funds
- FHWA Guidance: *How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan*
- Section 403 pedestrian safety research and demonstration projects
- Section 405 (h) non-motorized safety grants
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
SHSO Efforts in Virginia

- Programmed $302,519 in FY 2018 (sec. 402)
- Focus on education and enforcement
- SHSO Pedestrian Safety Task Force (2016)
Thank you!


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