



Washington State Strategic Highway Safety Plan 2019: Legislation and Policy
Learn More - Page 206 of the Plan

Challenge: Despite a strong record of passing and enforcing successful policies, Washington's traffic fatalities and serious injuries are increasing.

Washington has a history of passing sound legislative policy. These include:

All-rider motorcycle helmet law (1990): Since 1990, we have had an all-rider motorcycle helmet law, which saves lives and reduces costs (estimated at 46 lives and \$500 million in economic costs in 2016).

Primary Seat Belt law (2002): Washington's seat belt use rate has been consistently among the best in the U.S since the law to effect.

Driving Under the Influence of Electronics (2017): Intended to reduce distracted driving, this law prohibits the use of personal electronic devices behind the wheel. A 2018 observational survey showed a decrease in the number of drivers who were holding their cellphones.

Despite policies like these, Washington's traffic fatalities and serious injuries continue to increase. Traffic safety professionals and advocates agree that this requires the state to take bold steps to change this trend.

Strategies and Objectives for Positive Change:

Expand Use of Automatic Traffic Safety Cameras: Wider use of speed cameras in Washington would annually save about 21 lives, prevent 21,000 injuries and save \$68 million in avoided crashes. Additionally, explore use of new automated traffic camera technology and their effects on privacy.

Consider Sobriety Checkpoints: Explore a pathway to balance constitutional privacy protections with the goals of sobriety checkpoints, as well as alternatives.

Improve Safety of Novice Drivers: Consider whether to expand Graduated Drivers Licensing to all novice drivers, regardless of age.

Funding for Safety: Evaluate what amount of funding is needed to address traffic safety in Washington state.