



The Vision Zero Act

Vision Zero concept »

More than 33,000 Americans are dying on our roadways each year, and fatalities among our most vulnerable road users — people who bike and walk — make up a growing share of those deaths. Conventional thinking assumes some traffic fatalities are inevitable, and therefore some death on our roads is acceptable.

Vision Zero dramatically shifts this false perception, and states that *all* traffic fatalities are preventable — and therefore the only acceptable level of fatalities is **zero**. The public is ready for this shift: A 2014 survey of almost 10,000 drivers conducted by the AAA Traffic Foundation found that 86% supported their state adopting Vision Zero policies.

Congress can embrace this new approach by supporting The Vision Zero Act. This bill promotes Vision Zero policies and practices that focus engineering, education and enforcement decision-making on eliminating traffic fatalities across all transportation modes — bicyclists, pedestrians and drivers — while also creating an efficient and accessible transportation system.

What it does »

THE VISION ZERO ACT:

» *Promotes and supports local innovation in traffic safety* by offering grants to local governments that have set aggressive policies to end traffic fatalities in their jurisdictions.

» *Directs funding to local governments to develop inter-agency plans* that connect the engineering of streets, with traffic enforcement and public education safety; improve implementation success; and create continuity for residents.

» *Funds the implementation of safety innovations, and gathers best practices* through a competitive grant program. Grant recipients must have both a Vision Zero policy and plan in place, and must document and report back to Congress and the US DOT best practices and lessons learned for dissemination to other cities and communities.

Why it matters »

Improving traffic safety is the top priority for the U. S. transportation system and cities are testing innovative new policies in how they design and build roads, how they educate drivers and others, and how they enforce traffic laws. The Vision Zero Act gives Congress the ability to speed up the learning process and promote best practices.

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WHY DO WE NEED VISION ZERO?

In 2014, the AAA Foundation surveyed almost 10,000 drivers in the United States – with some concerning results...

» **97%** find it unacceptable to **DRIVE AFTER DRINKING**, yet
» 1 in 8 (13%) reported having done so in the past 30 days

» **96%** find it unacceptable to **TYPE OR TEXT** while driving, yet
» 1 in 4 (27%) reported having done so in the past 30 days

» **94%** find it unacceptable to **RUN A RED LIGHT** yet
» 1 in 3 (36%) reported having done so in the past 30 days

» **90%** find it unacceptable to drive 10+ mph **OVER THE SPEED LIMIT** in a residential area, yet
» Nearly half (44%) reported having done so in the past 30 days

Why the disconnect? Current roadway design standards & lack of effective enforcement encourages unsafe driving behavior.

More than 33,000 Americans are dying on our roadways each year, and fatalities among our most vulnerable road users — people who bike and walk — make up a growing share of those deaths. Conventional thinking assumes some traffic fatalities are inevitable, and therefore some death on our roads is acceptable.

Vision Zero is a dramatic paradigm shift that recognizes that ALL TRAFFIC FATALITIES ARE PREVENTABLE, and that the only acceptable number of deaths is ZERO.

For decades, conventional *engineering* practices have encouraged designing and building roads at 5-15 miles per hour faster than the safe, desired speed for the street. This means drivers aren't able to react to the presence of cyclists, pedestrians and other drivers. It also means there's no space left for people who bike and walk — who also face longer crossing distances at intersections that are few and far between.

Vision Zero promotes engineering solutions such as COMPLETE STREETS policies, CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN and TRAFFIC CALMING.

Engineering is only part of the solution. Vision Zero insists on better *education and enforcement* across all transportation modes — for instance, diversion classes for bicyclists who run red lights, or drivers' education classes that include a section on distracted driving.

Comprehensive traffic safety education for all road users, backed up by stricter enforcement of all our traffic laws, can create a culture of safety that will save lives, improve communities, and make our roads safer for everyone.

Each community with a Vision Zero policy chooses what strategies & programs will help them reach the goal of ZERO TRAFFIC FATALITIES.

