
POLICY RESOLUTION 2006-03

**TITLE: ADDRESSING HIGHWAY SAFETY AS A NATIONAL HEALTH ISSUE – PROMOTE
ROADWAY SAFETY TO OUR NATIONS GOVERNORS AND STATE LEGISLATURES**

WHEREAS, AASHTO and its member Departments remain fully committed to reducing the number of deaths and disabling injuries on our Nation's roads as evidenced by current AASHTO policy positions and efforts to implement AASHTO's Strategic Highway Safety Plan, including the adoption by the Board of Directors on June 1, 2003, of a fatality rate goal of 1.0 deaths per Hundred Million Vehicle Miles Traveled by 2008; and

WHEREAS, the AASHTO's Strategic Highway Safety Plan is a comprehensive approach to improve safety through the synergy of the 4'E's ... Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Emergency medical services and;

WHEREAS, The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified roadway fatalities and disabling injuries as being the second leading cause of productive days lost by 2015, second only to heart disease. Furthermore, WHO also estimates the cost of road crash injuries at roughly 2% of gross national product (GNP) in the United States. In addition, the USDOT has estimated the annual economic cost of crashes in the United States at roughly \$230 Billion in 2000 dollars and;

WHEREAS, Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among 4 to 34 years-olds and;

WHEREAS, annually our nation suffers over 43,000 fatalities; Men, Women, and children dead with over 3 Million more sustaining disabling injuries due to roadway crashes; and,

WHEREAS, providing a safe living environment reflects strong family values, and as transportation professionals, we have the opportunity and obligation to improve the safety of our roadways for our family and friends; and,

WHEREAS, Health Care expenditures continue to dominate state spending, accounting for 32% (\$320 Billion) of state budgets in 2006 and;

WHEREAS, Medicaid expenditures are estimated to increase by 4.5% in state budgets in fiscal 2007;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials that in the interest of promoting public health, strong families and safe and livable communities, AASHTO recommends that Governors include in their agenda, support of State Strategic Highway Safety Plans & initiatives to address the extreme loss of life and the staggering costs associated with disabling injuries on our nation's roadways. AASHTO further recommends that there be established a joint NGA-AASHTO roadway safety task force whose mission will include establishing a partnership with the NCSL to address this serious health issue.