

Road Safety Improvements By Anam Ahmed

“652 Kentucky roadway fatalities this year” read a sign on my way to school. The following day, I saw “656 Kentucky roadway fatalities this year” on the same sign and was shocked when I realized that four people had passed since the previous day in car accidents. As a commuter, I drive to and from school and was worried when I saw the number of roadway deaths in my home state in 2019 alone. As I am often on the road, I encounter aggressive drivers and witness irresponsible decisions being made. In order to improve road safety in Kentucky, as well as the United States, current laws must be enforced strictly, and new safety laws need to be created.

“For more than two decades, speeding has been involved in approximately one-third of all motor vehicle fatalities.” (NHTSA, 2018) When a driver decides to speed, they have forfeited their safety as well as the safety of others on the road. Speeding not only includes a violation of the law, but it implies a loss of vehicle control, greater crash severity, and less time to react when in emergency situations (NHTSA, 2018). Oftentimes, I have seen people driving well over the speed limit, weaving in and out of traffic, causing everyone on the road to be in danger. Speeding laws, although enforced, are not done so effectively. In order to improve road safety, the speed limit must be heavily enforced, and this can be done in a variety of ways. Along with a greater police presence on the roads, with the help of evolving technology, monitors can be placed in cities and on highways to detect and ticket speeding drivers. Moreover, speeding repercussions should be more severe and include a larger fine. These law improvements would encourage drivers to abide by the speed limit and be safer drivers.

In addition, distracted driving caused by cell phone usage is a rising problem that plagues the roads. With texting and driving causing over 330,000 crashes that lead to severe injury, this

is an issue that needs attention (teensafe.com). Currently, 48 states have a ban on texting and driving; however, only 21 states have a ban on hand-held cell phone use (ghsa.org). This illustrates that laws pertaining to hand-held cell phone use in over half of the states, including Kentucky, must still be passed. With the passage of these laws, cell phone usage related crashes can be prevented. Furthermore, if laws are implemented that require educational courses pertaining to the negative impacts of cell phone usage while driving and, broadly, distracted driving, the roads would be a safer place.

As an individual, I can continue to abide by traffic laws, be alert while driving, and report dangerous drivers; I can advocate for laws that improve road safety. I can educate my peers and family members about road safety issues to ensure that those around me are responsible drivers. With new laws and individual efforts, road safety can be improved and less roadway fatalities can occur.

Bibliography

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