

**Talking Points Prepared for
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Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
For the
2004 Safety Belt Use Survey Announcement
Seattle, Washington
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- **Proud of our research collaboration with Harborview Medical Center and Dr. Rivara.**
- **Thanks to Secretary Mineta for being the strongest possible force behind raising belt use nationwide.**
- **We are very proud of this milestone. For the first time in history, four out of five drivers are bucking their safety belt. That is a huge accomplishment and without the determination of this Secretary, we would not have achieved it.**

- **Leadership of the state highway safety offices and the Governors Highway Safety representatives, and in many states the Governors themselves.**
- **Law enforcement was key in this increase of belt use. Highway patrol, sheriffs and Chiefs of Police dedicated themselves to making sure Americans buckled up and 80% belt usage is proof.**
- ***Click It or Ticket*, our national high visibility law enforcement campaign aimed at increasing safety belt only works if law enforcement officers are there to enforce traffic laws.**
- **We owe a tremendous debt to the members of Congress (including Sen. Patty Murray) who took a chance on us**

when we had the idea to take *Click It Or Ticket* nationwide.

- **Congress allocated \$10 million for national paid advertising, and authorized us to another award \$36 million to States for *Click It Or Ticket* programs.**
- **In addition to this high-visibility effort, there are very many low-visibility players, behind the scenes who are committed to making America safer, such as the National Safety Council.**
- **The auto and insurance industry have put significant amounts of resources to support the efforts of the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign.**

- **I also want to thank the many State legislators who have taken strong stands on behalf of safety belt use by sponsoring and supporting primary safety belt laws.**
- **Particularly those in Tennessee, Delaware and Illinois who have recently passed primary safety belt laws.**
- **Our data shows that States can expect an 11-percentage point increase in safety belt use after upgrading from a secondary law to a primary one. And every percentage point gives us 270 lives and \$800 million of economic cost saved.**
- **There are still 30 states that need to upgrade their laws. It is truly a matter of life and death for the citizens of those states.**

- **The President's highway reauthorization bill contains generous incentives for the other 30 states to do the right thing and upgrade their laws, and the Senate has agreed.**
- **We encourage Congress to include those incentives as they reauthorize the highway and surface transportation bill we call SAFETEA.**
- **Mr. Secretary, now that we have met this major milestone, our agency is committed to bring our nation up to the use of other developed countries, including our neighbor Canada, and get to that 90% usage rate that will save another 3,000 lives a year.**
- **I call upon every State to follow the good example of WA, HI, OR and CA, and increase their safety belt use to**

above 90%. This vision is realistic, and our west coast states have proven that.

- **This is an urgent national need, and Mr. Secretary, you have our commitment to work with our partners in the States to get the job done of making our roads safer for American families.**