

What Missouri's newspapers are saying about the primary safety belt law...



St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 1/3/07

Buckle Up, Missouri

Seat belt use actually is declining in Missouri, from 77 percent in 2004 to 75 percent this year. That's just plain dumb: Two-thirds of Missourians who died in crashes were not wearing safety belts.

Rep. Neal St. Onge, R-Ellisville, who chairs the Missouri House Transportation Committee, **has proposed a bill to let police stop and ticket drivers for seat belt violations. MoDOT is cheering him on. So are we.**

Independence Examiner, 1/4/07

Tighten Missouri's seat-belt law. Legislators have blown this off for too long. As it stands now, only a back-handed enforcement is allowed: A driver can only be ticketed for not wearing a seat belt when already pulled over for something else. That makes no sense.

Kansas City Star, 12/29/06

Upgrade Laws On Seat Belts

Opponents of seat-belt laws say buckling up is a personal decision, but the costs of death or severe injury are not confined to those involved in crashes. If a low-income individual is hurt, for example, the costs of medical treatment may be paid by taxpayers through programs such as Medicaid. And when injuries and deaths in a given area are above the national norm, those risks are reflected in the insurance premiums of other drivers.

This is one case where the costs of risky behavior are not borne solely by individuals. **It's time Kansas and Missouri lawmakers approved primary seat-belt laws.**

Hannibal Courier-Post, 11/6/06

We expect a safe transportation system and are willing to pay for it, yet we won't take a step aimed at improving seat belt usage, which will translate into higher seat belt usage and lower crash-related deaths.

Making our roads safer should remain a top priority, not only for lawmakers, but for all Missourians.

St. Joseph News-Press, 12/22/06

... we ask our readers to give the bill ... a fair hearing. **The proposed tightening of the state's seat-belt law makes sense** ... every piece of evidence proves that seat belts do save lives.

Joplin Globe, 2/5/07

Twenty-six states already have a primary enforcement seat-belt law. **It's time for Missouri to make its seat-belt law real.**

State of Transportation Address

Bite-Sized

“The Missouri Department of Economic Development reports that our 5.7 billion-dollar, five-year statewide transportation improvement program provides an impressive economic benefit to citizens. Ultimately, for every one billion dollars we invest in transportation we generate 3.6 billion dollars in economic activity.”

“When we set out to use Amendment 3 funds to make Missouri’s busiest 2,200 miles of roads smoother and safer in just three years, we thought that would be an extraordinary accomplishment. Last year we did just that... not just as promised, but one year and 23 days early.”

“A nationwide survey of truckers by *Overdrive Magazine* ranked Interstates 44 and 70 in Missouri as the second and third most improved highways in the country. That is a dramatic change from just the previous year when that same magazine ranked I-44 in Missouri as the second-worst highway in the nation and our highways overall were also ranked second-worst.”

“If you thought the Smooth Roads Initiative was impressive, just wait until you experience this. Better Roads, Brighter Future is the Smooth Roads Initiative on steroids. This groundbreaking program will result in 5,600 miles of our busiest highways being smoother and safer by 2012.”

“Despite the effectiveness of median guard cables and the other measures we have taken to make our highways safer, we all know that it is driver behavior that results in most highway fatalities and serious injuries. The fact is that the most effective ‘guard cable’ is the one you strap across your body when you enter your vehicle.”

“It is time to act. We spend billions of dollars making our highways safer. Without spending a dime, we could save 90 lives each year. It is imperative that we make 2007 the year we say, “completed as promised” about a primary safety belt law and saving those 90 lives.”

“We are in the midst of a bubble for funding of highway construction. From the top of this peak we can observe a very low valley. Our current construction program of 1.3 billion dollars, the largest in Missouri history, drops off a cliff in 2010 and plummets to 569 million dollars, which is slightly less than where we were prior to Amendment 3.”