



U.S. Department of Transportation
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News

FACT SHEET: Safety in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is a generational investment in America's transportation system and provides substantial resources to improve safety and save lives. The legislation provides the tools and resources to significantly advance national safety priorities across the Department's programs by more than doubling funding for surface transportation programs that improve the safety of people and vehicles in our transportation system, including highways, trucks, rail, and pipeline and hazardous materials transport. Roughly 95 percent of fatalities in our transportation system occur on the roadways, so the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law directs a majority of funding towards addressing serious injuries and fatalities on our roadways. Over five years, for roadway safety alone, the legislation invests \$13 billion over Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act levels.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will make our roadways safer, make our vehicles safer, encourage safer behavior, improve safety research and data collection, and invest in safety across modes of transportation.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests in making our roadways safer for all users. The new and first of its kind \$6 billion Safe Streets and Roads for All program will fund local efforts to reduce roadway crashes and fatalities through grants for planning and projects — especially for people who walk and bike who are disproportionately impacted by crashes. These funds will support existing safety efforts as well as establish new local data-driven efforts to reverse trends comparable to similar safety-oriented plans and programs such as Vision Zero and the Road to Zero Coalition.

The BIL also acknowledges the importance of Complete Streets policies and standards – streets that ensure the safe and adequate accommodation of all users of the transportation system, including those who walk, bike, and roll. The legislation requires States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to spend funds on activities that support Complete Streets, such as adopting and developing standards, policies, and plans.

The legislation also advances roadway safety policy by requiring updates to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which defines the standards used by road managers to install and maintain traffic control devices (e.g., stop signs, lane markings, traffic lights, etc.) on all

public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public travel. It also requires that the initial update include protection of vulnerable road users such as walkers and bikers, and the safe testing of automated vehicle technology.

Additionally, the BIL provides nearly \$16 billion over five years to the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), nearly \$4 billion more than in the FAST Act. This federal aid program focused on infrastructure safety provides crucial funding to State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries using a data-driven, strategic approach to improving roadway safety. The BIL also restores spending flexibility, allowing up to 10% of HSIP funds to be used for certain non-infrastructure activities such as traffic safety educational campaigns and outreach.

Lastly, the BIL includes \$350 million over five years for a new Wildlife Crossing Pilot. According to NHTSA, in 2018, approximately 312,000 reported collisions on U.S. roads involved an animal, representing 4.6 percent of all reported motor vehicle collisions. This new competitive grant program will improve safety on rural roads by providing funding for projects that reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions through improved habitat connectivity. It also requires the Secretary to update a 2008 study on wildlife vehicle collisions, including the causes and impacts of wildlife collisions as well as solutions and best practices for reducing wildlife collisions and improving habitat connectivity.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will make vehicles safer. BIL provides funding and policy to advance vehicle safety for drivers and those outside of vehicles.

The legislation requires that all new passenger motor vehicles be equipped with advanced crash avoidance technologies—forward collision warning and automatic emergency braking systems, and lane-departure and lane-keeping assist systems. It also calls upon the Secretary to establish motor vehicle safety standards to require new passenger motor vehicles to be equipped with advanced impaired driving prevention technology. Impaired driving is a major contributing factor to fatal and serious injuries, and about 28 people in the United States die each day in crashes involving alcohol.

The BIL also requires updates to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) five-star crash worthiness testing program for new vehicles, known as the “New Car Assessment Program” (NCAP). NCAP provides consumers with critical safety information when they are purchasing a vehicle. It has been nearly 12 years since the program has had a major upgrade, and changes will incorporate many of the latest technological advances as part of the five-star rating. NHTSA is planning to issue the notice in early 2022. The BIL also includes the requirement to establish and regularly update a roadmap to plan for, and implement, additional improvements to NCAP.

The BIL will also improve the safety of large trucks that operate on U.S. highways every day and are critical to the Nation’s economy. Specifically, the legislation requires that the Secretary prescribe safety standards and performance requirements for the installation and use of automatic emergency braking (AEB) systems on heavy-duty commercial motor vehicles. This requirement will significantly reduce the number of crashes involving large trucks, especially rear-end crashes. The BIL also directs the Secretary to strengthen rear underride guard standards. Underride guards

are metal bars that hang from truck trailers to prevent vehicles from sliding underneath a trailer in a collision. The legislation also calls for the Department to conduct additional research on the design and development of both rear and side impact guards to inform future performance standards

Lastly, the BIL will remove dangerous commercial vehicles from the road through the new Immobilization Grant Program, which will provide discretionary grants to States to immobilize or impound motorcoaches and large passenger vans that are determined to be unsafe or fail inspection. The program will fund another way to get risky commercial drivers off the roads.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law supports efforts to encourage safer behavior among those who drive on our roadways. The legislation will help drivers make safer decisions on the roadway, thereby reducing crashes and fatalities. The BIL creates new highway safety program eligibilities to promote widespread and proper use of child restraints, improve vehicle recall awareness when a motor vehicle safety issue or defect is found, prevent child heatstroke fatalities, reduce collisions associated with stopped emergency response vehicles, and educate drivers to prevent misuse or misunderstanding of new vehicle technologies onboard their personal vehicle.

The legislation will also fund advertising campaigns to reduce the impaired operation of motor vehicles and promote the use of seatbelts such as the “Click-It or Ticket” media campaign. The BIL also provides almost \$1.9 billion for the NHTSA’s Section 405 National Priority Safety Programs, which provide incentive grants to States focused on seat belt use, impaired and distracted driving, driver licensing laws, improved data collection and analysis, and bike and pedestrian safety.

The legislation also provides more than \$2 billion over five years to augment commercial motor vehicle (CMV) safety efforts to reduce CMV crashes through the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) formula grant. This investment will support efforts to improve the safe operation of motor carriers and passenger vehicle drivers operating around large trucks by funding high-visibility traffic enforcement efforts in high-crash corridors.

Additionally, this historic increase in commercial vehicle safety grant funding will support additional investigations of unsafe trucking companies to ensure that only safe, properly managed trucking companies are allowed to continue operating on U.S. highways. The BIL also includes \$25 million for a new competitive grant program for commercial motor vehicle training and support, which will provide funding to nonprofit organizations to develop training materials and to provide training to non-Federal employees for commercial motor vehicle safety enforcement, so that additional State and local law enforcement officers can be trained to stop and inspect large trucks.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests in innovation, data, and research that will help inform future safety interventions, build on our understanding of safety issues, and improve existing safety activities.

The legislation also provides \$1.5 billion to modernize data collection systems and improve the quality and extent of data collected through investigations. These efforts will include revisions to collection systems focused on vulnerable road user data, updates to the common data field standard called the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC), upgrading the Crash Investigation Sampling System (CISS) to collect information on factors involved in a given crash and to establish near real-time data feeds on all reported crashes by launching a State grant program and upgrading NHTSA's IT infrastructure to enhance safety and to allow the Department to understand and address trends as they are identified.

The BIL includes \$1.55 billion in total funding for NHTSA programs focused on highway safety research and development, vehicle safety and behavioral research, and the National Driver Register. The \$970 million for NHTSA's Highway Safety Research and Development Program includes a 40 percent increase in funding to improve highway safety through research on human behavior, developing technologies to detect drug-impaired drivers and in-vehicle technology to prevent alcohol-impaired driving, emergency medical services, and other highway safety issue areas.

The legislation also provides \$36 million to support the maintenance of the National Driver Register, which will assist States in addressing data completeness and timeliness challenges in order to identify dangerous drivers when they move across State lines.

The BIL provides \$1 billion over five years for the Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program, a new competitive grant program for city or community demonstration deployment projects that incorporate innovative transportation technologies or uses of data, including coordinated automation, connected vehicles, and intelligent sensor-based infrastructure.

The \$548.5 million for vehicle safety and behavioral safety research will support research on vehicle technologies such as Automated Driving Systems and Advanced Driver Assistance Systems, will support improvements to help owners of vehicles with safety recalls get them fixed, and may also be used for the National Driver Register. Under the BIL, the Secretary is required to report to Congress on the challenges that States face in sharing data on alcohol and drug toxicology results for NHTSA's national crash databases, and to provide steps to improve this data collection. This will provide a better understanding of the extent of impaired driving and its involvement in crashes. It also directs the Secretary to evaluate the effectiveness of innovative behavioral traffic safety countermeasures to inform guidance for State highway safety officials. Lastly, the legislation calls on the Department to conduct research to examine how connected vehicle systems can safely account for people walking, biking, and rolling.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also provides significant funds in rail, pipelines, and aviation to improve safety across the transportation system. The BIL creates a \$5.5 billion Railroad Crossing Elimination grant program, which will award grants for projects that make improvements to highway and pathway rail crossings. Eligible project examples include eliminating highway-rail at-grade crossings that are frequently blocked by trains, adding gates or signals, relocating track, or installing a bridge. The program will improve both the safety of communities, and the mobility of people and goods.

The BIL also expands the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program, providing \$5 billion over five years. CRISI funds will support projects that

improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail, funding projects such as the deployment of railroad safety technology and highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects.

The BIL also includes a new \$1 billion program to provide grants to community-owned utilities to replace leaky and obsolete cast iron and bare steel natural gas pipelines, some of which are over 100 years old. These funds for modernization will upgrade pipelines using the latest technological, engineering, and material advancements which will mitigate safety issues and reduce gas leaks that contribute to the nation's greenhouse gas emissions.

Lastly, the BIL includes \$5 billion over five years to support aviation safety by providing funding to improve air traffic control towers and other Federal Aviation Administration facilities and equipment crucial for the safe movement of people and aircrafts at airports.

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