

DRAFT TEMPLATE



_____ Urges Passengers to Speak Up for Safety During National Passenger Safety Week

Don't worry about being a 'back-seat driver' when it comes to saving lives, experts say

City, State, Date -- _____ is joining with more than 70 traffic safety and advocacy groups nationwide to observe National Passenger Safety Week, January 19-26, 2026. This critical lifesaving initiative, led by [We Save Lives](#) and [The National Road Safety Foundation](#), empowers passengers to take an active role in promoting safety and preventing crashes by speaking up when confronted with dangerous driving behaviors.

Reckless behavior such as speeding, driving impaired, and distracted driving continue to threaten lives across the nation and locally. Passengers have the power to prevent crashes and save lives by speaking up against unsafe driving practices.

Last year, 40,901 people died in crashes on American roads and highways. An estimated [3,308 people were killed in crashes](#) that involved distracted drivers, and 289,310 were injured. There were there were 11,302 unbuckled passengers killed in crashes and [13,524 people killed in alcohol-impaired driving traffic deaths](#). In _(your state or locality) ____ people were killed in crashes last year. Of those, ____ people were killed in speeding-related crashes and ____ were killed in alcohol-impaired crashes. Passengers accounted for 24 percent of passenger vehicle fatalities nationwide, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

“When people understand the dangers of driving impaired, distracted, aggressively and drowsy, there’s a better chance they will speak up if they are passengers in a car being driven unsafely,” said **Michelle Anderson, director of operations at The National Road Safety Foundation**, a non-profit founded more than 60 years ago to promote safe driving behavior through education. “The National Passenger Safety Week campaign hopes to

empower passengers about how they can save lives by calling out unsafe driving before crashes happen.”

Insert quote from your spokesperson...

“All passengers need to speak up, said **Candace Lightner, founder and president of We Save Lives**. “We can stop crashes just by speaking up, but we must stop worrying about being considered a ‘back-seat driver.’ It’s for everyone’s safety.”

National Passenger Safety Week highlights the critical role passengers play in roadway safety and encourages them to challenge unsafe driving behaviors. The campaign’s Courage to Intervene Promise serves as a guiding pledge:

- Stop drivers from driving buzzed, drunk, or drugged.
- Refuse to ride with impaired drivers.
- Discourage drivers from using cell phones while driving.
- Intervene to prevent unsafe driving, prioritizing safety for everyone on the road.

More information, including tips for how to speak up, are at nationalpassengersafety.org. The site also has the downloadable Courage to Intervene Promise.

We Save Lives, founded by in 2014 by Candace Lightner, is an umbrella organization of more than 50 highway safety advocates, law enforcement agencies, companies, local, state, national and international organizations, victim’s/survivor groups, and others who want to stop the carnage on our highways.

The National Road Safety Foundation, founded in 1962, produces free videos and teaching materials on distracted driving, speed and aggression, impaired driving, drowsy driving, driver proficiency, pedestrian safety and a host of other safety issues. It also sponsors contests to engage teens in promoting safe driving to their peers and in their communities, partnering nationally with youth advocacy groups including SADD, FCCLA, Impact Teen Drivers and Teens in the Driver Seat, and with major auto shows in Chicago and Detroit.