

# DRIVER EDUCATION

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NEW METHODS AND EXPANDED  
REQUIREMENTS

Joint Transportation Committee  
Draft Report Presentation  
October 16, 2014

# JTC Budget Proviso

2014 Supplemental Transportation Budget (ESSB 6001, section 204(6))

“The joint transportation committee shall:

- coordinate a work group comprised of representatives from the department of licensing, the Washington state traffic safety commission, and other stakeholders as deemed necessary, along with interested legislators, to:
- develop parameters for and make recommendations regarding a pilot program that would allow students to meet traffic safety education requirements online.
- Additionally, the work group shall make recommendations related to requiring driver training to individuals between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four who have not previously passed a driver training education program or other methods of enhancing the safety of this high-risk group.
- The joint transportation committee shall issue a report of its findings to the transportation committees of the house of representatives and senate by December 1, 2014.”

# Work Group Members

- 21 members
- Four Legislators:
  - Senators Liias and Rolfes
  - Representatives Hayes and Ryu
- Department of Licensing, Traffic Safety Commission, State Patrol, Superintendent for Public Instruction
- 7 representatives of private driver training schools
- 1 representative from public schools
- AAA, Farmers Insurance
- Beth Redfield, JTC staff, facilitator

# Study Outline

- **Two subject matters**
  - **Online Driver Education, 15 – 17 year olds**
    - Parameters for a pilot program
  - **New requirements for 18 – 24 year olds**
    - Recommendations for enhancing safety
- Work Group met twice: presentations on background information, live demonstrations of online driver education programs, and discussions of parameters
- Staff group assisted in developing background materials, reviewing study and meeting materials

# Young Driver Background Information

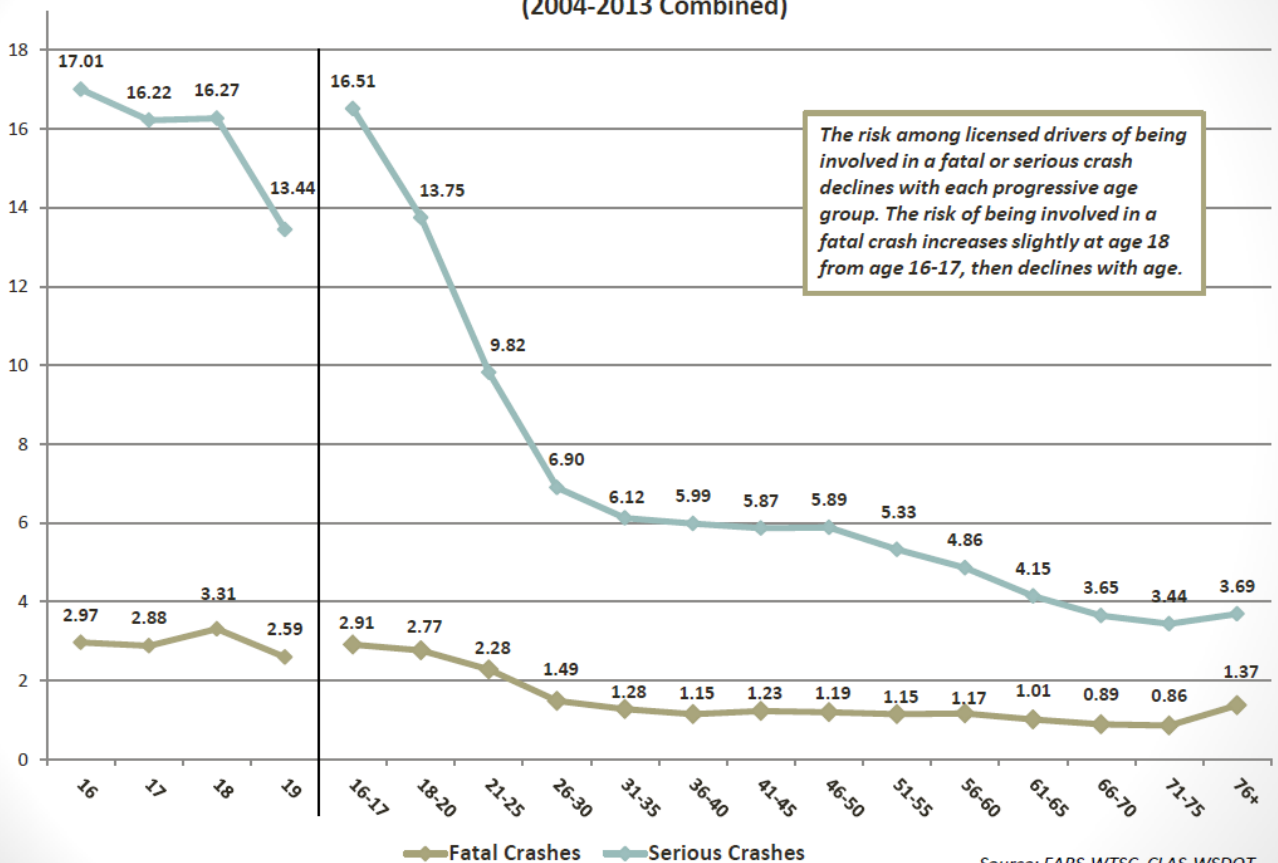
- Dual Path to Licensure
  - Under 18—must complete driver education (including behind-the-wheel), pass knowledge and skills exams, and subject to driving restrictions (Intermediate Driver License)
  - 18 and over—must only pass driver knowledge and skills exams
- Washington trend (2003 to 2009) of some new licensees waiting until 18 or 19 to get a license
  - National study found most common reasons:
    - Not having a car
    - Able to get around without driving
    - Costs associated with driving
    - Lower household income

# Young Driver Safety

## Background Data

- 16 and 17 year olds are the riskiest drivers
- 18 to 24 year olds are still risky drivers and are involved in more crashes because they are a larger group.

**Drivers Involved in Fatal and Serious Crashes by Age Categories:**  
**RATES per 10,000 Licensed Drivers**  
 (2004-2013 Combined)



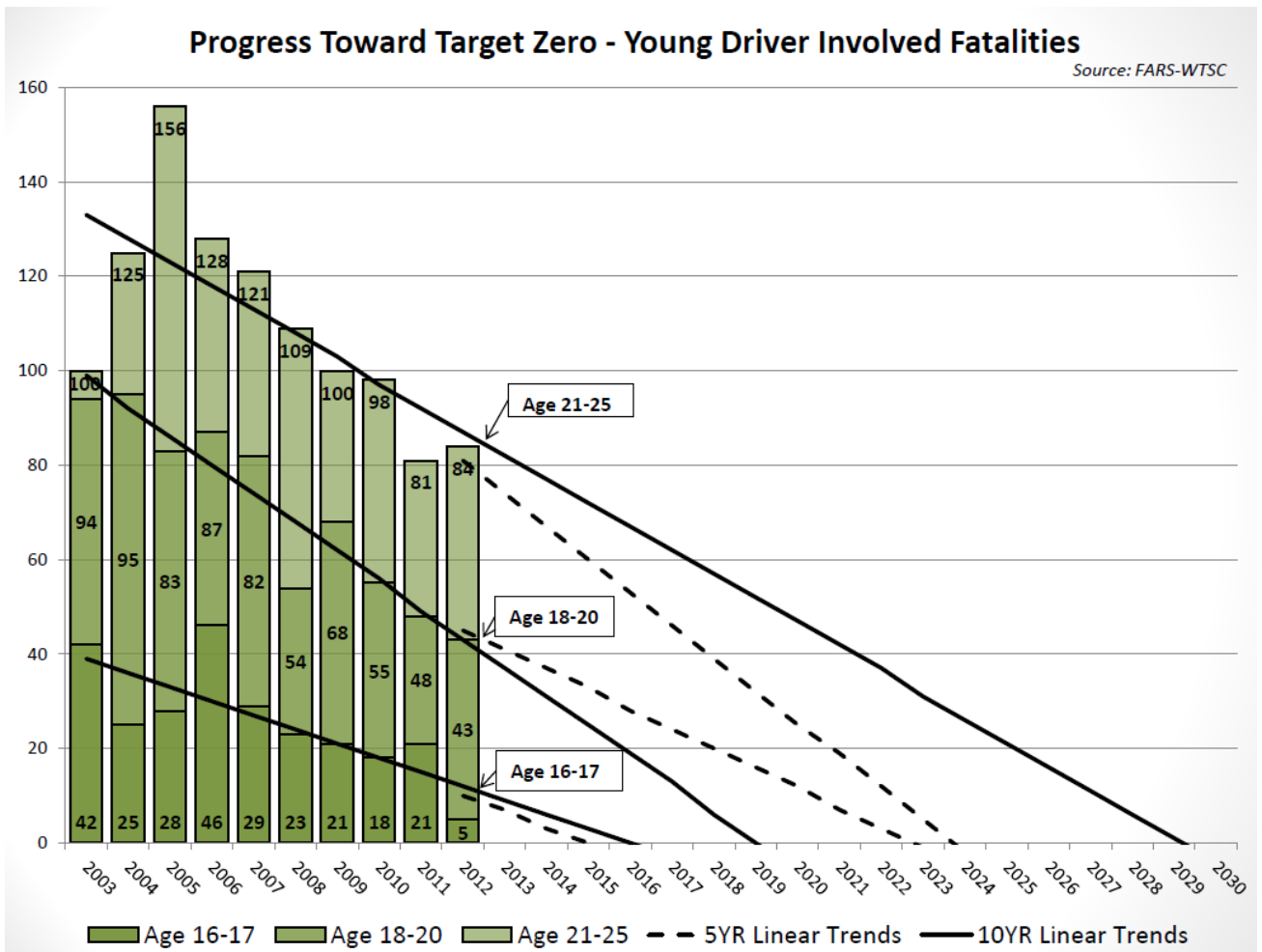
*The risk among licensed drivers of being involved in a fatal or serious crash declines with each progressive age group. The risk of being involved in a fatal crash increases slightly at age 18 from age 16-17, then declines with age.*

Source: FARS-WTSC, CLAS-WSDOT,

# Young Driver Safety

## Background Data

Target Zero has identified Young Drivers as a Priority Level One to address with safety improvements



# Research Literature: What works?

## Background Information

- Driver education, *on its own*, has not been shown to reduce crashes.
- Driver education is the gateway to the Intermediate Driver License path, which has shown safety impacts for the youngest drivers.
  - 22% crash reduction for 16 year olds
  - 6% crash reduction for 17 year olds
  - Jury still out on impact for 18 and over
- NHTSA has identified online driver education programs and identified key strong characteristics, including:
  - Short screens of text, interactive tasks
  - Certified driving instructors provide individual feedback
  - Parental involvement
  - Identify verification
  - Challenging exams



# Research Literature: What works?

## Background Information

- Online general education studies have shown modest improvement in student performance, when online and face-to-face instruction is blended.
- A review of many studies of technology initiatives for at-risk high school students found:
  - Blending of technology and teacher support improved achievement
  - Computer-based instruction can—
    - diagnose student understanding,
    - customize material,
    - offer interactive instructional materials,
    - provide feedback to students, and
    - provide detailed information about student progress.

# What are other states doing?

## Background Information

- 16 & 17 year olds: Of the 31 states that require driver education, 12 allow an online course to substitute for the traditional classroom.
- 18 & over: 11 states make additional requirements—driver education, learner permit, supervised driving
- JTC staff survey of online pricing (six states):
  - Only California showed a clear savings to the student from taking an online version of driver education.
  - Colorado and Idaho, pricing was the same.
  - Suggests that online may not reduce prices for students.

# Parameters for changes to driver education

## Work Group Preferences and Study Findings

- What is a parameter?
  - An element of a program or policy choice that may be included in legislation to implement online driver education or other safety initiatives for young drivers
- While Work Group did not reach consensus on many issues, staff identified “preferences” from the discussions
  - Staff supplemented preferences with findings from the background research
- What is online education?
  - Alternative method of course delivery in which learning and teaching take place via computer network.

## What should online driver education look like? Work Group Preferences and Study Findings

### 18 to 24 year olds

- Start with a new requirement for online driver education for 18 to 24 year old novice drivers
- Goal: improve safety
- Short course (less than the 36 total hours required of younger drivers)
- Include behind-the-wheel requirement
- Not a temporary pilot, but a permanent new requirement
- Proof of concept before adopting online for 15 to 17 year olds
- Significant policy change to expand driver education requirements to this group

## What should online driver education look like?

### Work Group Preferences

#### 15 to 17 year olds

- Wait to offer online driver education for 15 to 17 year olds
- Goal: accessibility and affordability
- Blend classroom and online instruction
- Online should supplement not substitute for classroom
- Teacher involvement is important
- Do not change the behind-the-wheel requirements
- A pilot project should ensure that there are no worsening of safety outcomes

# Parameters for changes to driver education

## Work Group Preferences and Study Findings

### Process and administration

- Transparency of implementation is important
- Delegate details of program design to DOL and SPI working with a stakeholder panel
- Details to include: curriculum design, online teaching methods, security issues, costs
- Allow sufficient time (two or more years) for implementation
- DOL and SPI will need additional resources to design new programs and for ongoing oversight

# Parameters for changes to driver education

## Work Group Preferences and Study Findings

### General Findings

- Quality of online education can be regulated by course criteria or performance outcomes.
- Washington's current knowledge and skills tests may need to be strengthened.
- Many Work Group members interested in more data collection on collisions, citations, and educational outcomes for the current driver education system.
- Subsidy programs increase affordability (example of motorcycle education).

# Next Steps

- Currently accepting feedback from Work Group on Draft Report
- Feedback from legislators today?
- Presentation of draft final report at December JTC meeting
- Draft Report is posted on JTC Website on the Meetings Page at:
  - <http://www.leg.wa.gov/JTC/>



# Questions?

Beth Redfield

Joint Transportation Committee

[beth.redfield@leg.wa.gov](mailto:beth.redfield@leg.wa.gov)

360-786-7327