



March 25, 2019

The Honorable Doug Green
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Green:

On behalf of Akron Children's Hospital and Safe Kids Ohio, I wish to express my support for HB 106, sponsored by Representatives Gary Scherer (R-Circleville) and Michael Sheehy (D-Toledo). Safe Kids Ohio strives to make our state a safer place for children to grow into healthy, successful adults. As a strong advocate for our children, Akron Children's and Safe Kids Ohio feels this bill would strengthen Ohio's graduated driver's license system. Our support focuses on two components:

1. Lengthening the temporary instruction permit from 6 to 12 months
2. Ensure newly licensed teen drivers are supervised while driving after 10 p.m., rather than midnight, for the first 6 months of licensure, with exemptions for work, school and religious activities.

Unfortunately, Ohio's young driver licensing system has not kept up with the latest research on teen driver crashes and how to prevent them. Teen crash rates are rising in our state, in fact Ohio is now 7th in the country for the highest number of teen fatality and injury crashes, according to a report by Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety. The number of people killed or injured in teen driver crashes jumped 15 percent in just two years. This bill addresses an important issue, which impacts all road users, as two thirds of those injured or killed in crashes involving teen drivers are people other than the teen driver.

This bill is about the valuable, behind the wheel experience each teen driver needs. Currently, Ohio teens are not gaining the experience they need with an adult to become safe drivers. A 12-month permit phase ensures every new driver has the chance to practice driving with an adult in all four seasons. Having a well-rounded driving experience in all types of weather is invaluable.

Nighttime driving protections for newly licensed young drivers protect them from the most dangerous driving conditions while they are still inexperienced and adjusting to driving without adult supervision. Research has proven that requiring newly licensed teen drivers to drive supervised after 10 p.m. results in large fatal crash reductions for 16-and 17-year-old drivers. It is important to reiterate that this 10 p.m. protection is not a curfew and current law exemptions remain in place if a teen driver has work, school or religious activities.

If passed, the bill will improve Ohio's graduated driver's license system, reduce the risk of crashes and injuries on our roads, and better prepare our teens for a lifetime of safe driving. Akron Children's Hospital and Safe Kids Ohio appreciates your consideration and urges you to support HB 106. Thank you for your consideration of this important, and overdue, legislation.

Respectfully,

Heather Trnka
State Director, Safe Kids Ohio
Injury Prevention Supervisor, Akron Children's Hospital