



OCCUPANT PROTECTION

PRIMARY ENFORCEMENT SEAT BELT LAWS

Advocacy

“The Click Clack Front and Back Club: Students Working to Upgrade New Jersey’s Rear Seat Belt Law”



USING VIDEO AND SOCIAL MEDIA TO GET THEIR MESSAGE ACROSS

View the student video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/ETkA3bDrPq4?si=awyg8jyNOGwa5NFA>

STUDENT CLUB ADVOCATES FOR SAFER ROADS

Students at Indian Hills High School in Oakland, NJ, formed the Click Clack Front and Back Club in 2019, and they quickly began advocating for legislation to upgrade the state’s rear seat belt law to primary enforcement. In 2021, they successfully engaged a [Senate sponsor](#) and soon after an [Assembly sponsor](#) for the seat belt legislation. This effort was driven in part by concern for their fellow teens. The students stated that teens are more likely to buckle up if they believe they must do so because there is clearer enforcement of seat belt laws. The students have been lobbying state legislators, working to generate grassroots support, and garnering media attention to help build support for the effort. As students have graduated, new students have joined the club to continue the momentum. At their end of school year party in 2023, Gov. Phil Murphy (D-NJ) joined the students virtually and affirmed the importance of seat belt use. The students were encouraged by the Governor’s message and are hopeful that their continued efforts will lead to legislative success in 2024.

LOOKING TO 2024

Leading up to the 2024 state legislative session, the students are laying the groundwork by building grassroots support and educating policymakers and the public about the importance of upgrading the seat belt law to primary enforcement for all occupants. The ultimate goal is to get everyone to buckle up on every trip to save lives. [Advocates](#) is glad to continue partnering with the Click Clack Front and Back Club including developing strategy, meeting to discuss updates, honing text, and providing information and resources. We look forward to building momentum for successful action in 2024.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Promoting seat belt safety

We are members of Indian Hills High School’s “Click Clack Front and Back” club, promoting seat belt safety in our community.

Last year, we initiated a conversation about enhancing the New Jersey seat belt law to reflect the importance of seat belt usage in the entire vehicle. In 2020, New York state added a rear seat belt requirement, among other improvements, to its seat belt law. As new drivers, we know that every occupant should wear a seat belt, but not everyone does. In several states, seat belt use rates increased 10% to 15% when primary enforcement was implemented.

Secondary enforcement laws, like the current New Jersey rear seat belt law, require police to first observe another violation, like speeding, before they can enforce a lack of seat belt use. Primary enforcement would help deter those who might not buckle up and would protect everyone in the car — unbelted occupants can become deadly projectiles in crashes.

We recognize that teenagers are more inclined to engage in safe behavior when legal aspects are involved. On May 17, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released the following update: 42,915 people died in crashes last year, a 10.5% increase from

2020. It’s time to upgrade our seat belt law and save lives.

Jill Fackelman
Sent on behalf of 27 student members of the Click Clack Front and Back club of Indian Hills High School in Oakland.