

Testimony of  
Raymond F. Kroll  
submitted to the House/Senate Conference Committee on  
HF 1684, Omnibus Transportation bill  
May 2, 2021

By way of introduction, in 1966, I began teaching driver education in my Civics Classes at Jefferson Junior High School located at 1200 W. 26th St. in Minneapolis. I was certified by the University of Minnesota in April 1968 after successful completion of course work under Mr. Bill Gebhardt.

In 1971, I was appointed as the Director of Transportation Services for the Minneapolis Public Schools. For the next 26 years, my responsibilities included supervision of school bus pupil transportation safety for district and contract school bus drivers. In 2001 I was employed by Driver Education Inc. of Woodbury, MN. I am a certified driver education instructor by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. For the past two decades, I have taught the 30 hour Driver Education Class at De La Salle High School on Nicollet Island in Minneapolis.

The first thing that each student enters in their notebooks from the white board is NO PARENT SHOULD EVER HAVE TO BURY THEIR CHILD. I then show the picture of Dr. Beth Ann Walden who at the age of 30 was tragically killed in a head on crash on I 35 b between Dallas and Austin Texas, on June 30, 1997. Her Mother my wife and younger sister tearfully gave permission for the staff at a hospital in Laredo, Texas to harvest Beth Anne's organs. In 2010 we learned that Beth Anne's heart allowed an unknown father's five year old daughter to live. I tell my students that I read the obituary column each day and I do not want to read their name. Furthermore, as they make a right turn from Central

Ave. N.E. to 27th Ave. N.E. we pass the Billman-Hunt Mortuary where they can pay their respects to me.

Why have I prefaced my remarks in this manner. I teach my students that driving vehicle is the most dangerous thing they will do in their lifetimes. It is more dangerous than sitting in a cramped seat in an aluminum tube flying at 37,000 feet in excess of 500 MPH. Speed Kills. Just recently a speeding BMW sedan entered the Lowry Hill tunnel on west bound I94. Excessive speed and centrifugal force resulted in the vehicle's collision with the tunnel walls. The fuel tank ruptured and two of the three occupants died in the wreckage. As a 40 year plus employee of the Minnesota Safety Council, I instructed DWI students and +55 drivers that defensive driving is driving to SAVE LIVES, TIME AND MONEY IN SPITE OF THE CONDITIONS AND THE ACTIONS OF OTHER DRIVERS. We live in an age where young men in their twenties and thirties are needlessly losing their lives in pickup truck crashes. The facts speak for themselves, and are best imparted by dedicated Minnesota Driver Education instructors in a live teacher to student platform.

In 2019, I was recognized as Minnesota Driver Education Teacher of Excellence, and was privileged to advance my research into INTERSECTION SURVIVAL at the annual meeting of ADTSEA American Driver and Traffic Safety Education, in Burlington, Vermont.

With a passion for highway traffic safety, I urge the Conference Committee to recognize the life saving research conducted by Dr. John Palmer, Chief Lobbyist for the MDTSEA. Rather than adopt online driver education, our association strongly favors that all stakeholders be assembled to review the benefits of best practices for driver education students and make

recommendations on how to improve our state's driver education programming with future legislative action.

I steadfastly urge you to choose the life saving opportunities provided by classroom instruction over anonline approach.

Respectfully,

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