



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

July 1, 2025

Dear Governor:

Safety is the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)'s top priority. While I am encouraged that the estimates of traffic fatalities for 2024 continue a downward trend, by decreasing 3.8 percent from 2023, we still have more work to do to improve safety and mobility on our Nation's highways. In 2024, the estimated number was a stunning 39,345. This is unacceptable. I ask that you join DOT and support our national initiative, Safe Arterials for Everyone through Reliable Operations and Distraction-Reducing Strategies (SAFE ROADS), to help improve safety and mobility, eliminate distractions, and keep people and goods moving throughout the United States.

DOT has strong partnerships with your State department of transportation (State DOT) to implement projects and achieve important national priorities, most notably safe mobility. The SAFE ROADS national initiative will focus on the non-freeway arterials within your State, including safety and operation at intersections and along segments, consistent and recognizable traffic control devices including crosswalk and intersection markings, and orderly use of the right-of-way that is kept free from distractions. These routes are where more than half of roadway fatalities in America occur and deserve enhanced attention. The goal of the SAFE ROADS national initiative is to partner with State and local governments to make the entire roadway right-of-way easier to interpret and navigate for all users, including pedestrians, vehicle operators, and automated vehicles alike. We ask that you ensure compliance with Federal statutes and regulations and accelerate the deployment of proven safety and operational solutions to make roads safer across America.

We are getting back to the basics – using data to guide decision-making and prioritize investments that reduce distraction while improving mobility and safety for all road users. Within 60 days, I request that your State DOT, in coordination with your metropolitan planning organizations, use available safety data, analysis, and assessments to develop a list of arterial segments, including intersections, with the highest safety, operational, or compliance concerns that will be addressed by the end of Fiscal Year 2026. Please submit the list of locations to your Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office.

FHWA will track the progress of this important nationwide initiative and stands ready to support you and your State DOT as you develop your plans. FHWA offers technical resources to assist with road safety audits and assessments in selecting effective safety and operational countermeasures, accelerating implementation of improvements, and complying with Federal standards, such as those for traffic control devices and use of the roadway right-of-way. Please

continue to inform your FHWA Division Office on progress as you take steps to address these locations. I look forward to meeting you at a future opportunity to learn about your success stories and best practices.

With our shared goals of moving people and goods safely and efficiently, we can make the expectation that all Americans make it home safely and on-time a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "SPDuffy", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean P. Duffy

cc:

State Transportation Department Chief Executives