

The STANDUP Act

Introduced by Reps. Tim Bishop (D-NY), Michael Castle (R-DE), and Chris Van Hollen Jr. (D-MD) in April 2009, the **Safe Teen and Novice Driver Uniform Protection Act of 2009** seeks to establish minimum federal requirements for Graduated Driver's License laws, and by means of financial incentive/penalty, encourage their adoption by all States within 3 years.

The Bill, H.R. 1895, has been subtitled the 'STANDUP Act' for its provisions that:

States must meet the following requirements:

Three stages of licensing should be used: Learner's Permit; Intermediate Stage; and Full Licensure.

Age 16 should be the minimum for issue of a Learner's permit.

Night driving should be supervised until Full Licensure at 18.

Driving while using communication devices, (taking/making phone calls and/or text messages), should be prohibited at least until age 18.

Unrestricted, Full Licensure should be available no earlier than age 18.

Passengers should be restricted: no more than one non-family member under 21 without supervision, until Full Licensure at age 18.

Any other requirement adopted by the Secretary of Transportation, such as a minimum of 6 months duration, and 30 hours supervised driving, for a Learner's Permit, may be included.

Compliance within three years of enactment of the Bill will make States eligible for incentive grants.

Three years are provided for States to meet the requirements, after which monetary sanctions may be imposed.

North Carolina's current **GDL** structure already fulfils most of the proposed requirements. Cell phone use already is prohibited for drivers under 18, and, from December 1st 2009, it will be illegal for *anyone* to read e-mail or send text messages while driving. If the proposed Bill becomes law, North Carolina would achieve full compliance by increasing the minimum age for entry into the Learner's Permit stage from 15 to 16 years; and the current Intermediate Stage restrictions on driving hours and number of peer passengers would have to continue until drivers turn 18 years.

The Bill cites State and National statistics on teen crashes and fatalities in States where GDL has been implemented.

In June 2009, in a letter to the U.S. House of Representatives, a coalition of many safety organizations, including the National Safety Council, endorsed the Bill and urged legislators to become co-sponsors.

Links:

www.saferoads4teens.org

www.allstate.com/STANDUP

Ref:

111th Congress, H.R. 1895 'Safe Teen and Novice Driver Uniform Protection Act of 2009' or the "STANDUP Act'.