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CALIFORNIA RANKS THIRD IN NUMBER OF OLDER DRIVERS KILLED OR INVOLVED IN TRAFFIC FATALITIES; AS BABY BOOMERS BEGIN TO TURN 65, U.S. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM INSUFFICIENT TO MEET THEIR GROWING MOBILITY AND SAFETY NEEDS

Eds. TRIP’s report identifies states with highest number and share of older drivers, states with highest fatality and crash rates involving older drivers, strategies to help aging motorists remain mobile, and recommended transportation improvements.

Washington, D.C.- As the Baby Boom Generation begins to turn 65, the number of older Americans and their share of the overall population will swell dramatically. But, according to a new report, although these older Americans will be more mobile and active than any previous generation, they will face a transportation system that is inadequate to offer the mobility and safety demanded by older Americans and the population in general. The report, “[Keeping Baby Boomers Mobile: Preserving Mobility and Safety for Older Americans](#),” was released today by TRIP, a national non-profit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C.

Despite their efforts to modify their own driving, and the fact that overall fatalities have declined in recent years, older motorists are still involved in a disproportionately high share of traffic fatalities. In 2010, there were 5,750 fatalities in crashes involving at least one driver 65 or older. And although drivers 65 and older account for eight percent of all miles driven, they comprise 17 percent of all traffic fatalities.

California leads the nation in the number of licensed drivers aged 65 and older and ranks third in both the number of drivers over 65 killed in 2010 and the number of traffic fatalities involving a driver 65 or older. Data for each state can be found in the report’s [appendix](#).

RANK	STATE	Number of Drivers 65+	STATE	Share of Drivers 65+	STATE	Fatalities where crash involved driver 65+	STATE	Drivers 65+ Killed	STATE	Share of Fatal Crashes Involving 65+
1	California	3,146,256	Connecticut	20%	Florida	503	Florida	271	Vermont	32%
2	Florida	2,744,378	West Virginia	20%	Texas	397	Texas	224	Kansas	23%
3	Texas	2,085,466	Florida	20%	California	390	California	219	Nevada	22%
4	New York	1,995,069	Pennsylvania	18%	Pennsylvania	265	North Carolina	153	Maine	22%
5	Pennsylvania	1,594,988	South Dakota	18%	North Carolina	232	Georgia	152	Iowa	21%
6	Ohio	1,344,285	Arkansas	18%	Georgia	228	Pennsylvania	150	New Jersey	21%
7	Illinois	1,296,614	Alabama	18%	New York	217	Ohio	132	Nebraska	21%
8	Michigan	1,180,219	Oklahoma	18%	Ohio	211	Tennessee	119	West Virginia	21%
9	North Carolina	1,045,281	Maine	18%	Michigan	187	New York	118	Oregon	21%
10	New Jersey	1,005,040	New York	18%	Tennessee	184	Michigan	108	Wisconsin	20%
11	Indiana	968,268	Delaware	18%	Illinois	159	Missouri	108	Florida	20%
12	Georgia	906,857	Minnesota	17%	Missouri	154	Indiana	97	Pennsylvania	20%
13	Virginia	807,561	Oregon	17%	Indiana	150	Illinois	90	South Dakota	20%
14	Tennessee	750,908	Indiana	17%	Alabama	143	Alabama	89	Minnesota	20%
15	Washington	725,623	Vermont	17%	Arizona	143	Kentucky	87	New Hampshire	20%
16	Massachusetts	714,392	Montana	17%	Virginia	134	Virginia	80	Michigan	20%
17	Missouri	700,242	Rhode Island	17%	Kentucky	132	South Carolina	74	Idaho	19%
18	Alabama	682,604	Iowa	17%	Wisconsin	122	Wisconsin	69	Indiana	19%
19	Wisconsin	675,817	North Dakota	17%	New Jersey	119	New Jersey	67	Missouri	19%
20	Arizona	664,175	Tennessee	17%	South Carolina	118	Oklahoma	67	Ohio	19%

According to the TRIP report, the population of Americans 65 and older will grow by 60 percent by 2025, at which time one in every five drivers will be over the age of 65. Because of good nutrition, improved health care, better education and higher incomes, new generations of older Americans will be more mobile, healthy and active for a longer portion of their lives than those just a few decades ago. For those 65 and older, 90 percent of travel takes place in a private vehicle.

“Public safety is a primary concern for all Californians and providing a long-term transportation bill with a steady stream of revenue is vital to the cost of maintaining safe and efficient roadways,” said Tom Holsman, chief executive officer of the Associated General Contractors of California. “There is much more that can be done to ensure public safety with steady revenues, and increased funding to support new and existing infrastructure will improve California and the nation’s roads and highways.”

“The growing ranks of older Americans will far outpace previous generations with their level of mobility and activity. Serving their needs will require a transportation system that includes safer roads, safer vehicles, safer drivers and improved choices,” said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP. “Congress can help not only older drivers, but all drivers by passing long-term federal surface transportation legislation now.”

The TRIP report offers a set of recommendations to improve the mobility and safety of older Americans. Since many of these recommendations are designed to reduce the consequences of driving errors, they would make roads safer for all Americans. These recommendations include the following:

- **SAFER ROADS:** clearer, brighter and simpler signage with large lettering; brighter street markings, particularly at intersections; widening or adding left-turn lanes and extending the length of merge or exit lanes; adding rumble strips.
- **SAFER DRIVERS:** promoting education and training programs for older drivers; evaluating and monitoring “at risk” older motorists through appropriate licensing requirements.
- **SAFER VEHICLES:** improving vehicles to help withstand and avoid crashes.
- **IMPROVED CHOICES:** ensuring public transit routes, vehicles, facilities and stops are easily accessible and accommodating to older or disabled passengers; and expanding non-traditional approaches tailored to the needs of older adults.