



## Clubs of New Jersey

# News Release

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### **New Jersey AAA Announces Coalition Supporting Legislation to Expand Graduated Drivers Licenses Requirements**

**Wayne, N.J., October 19, 2021** — To kick off National Teen Driver Safety Week, AAA Clubs of New Jersey — along with more than 20 like-minded traffic safety, education, and insurance organizations — announced their support for **S1963/A1354**, sponsored by Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez and Assembly Transportation Chairman Daniel Benson. The legislation would require new permit holders under the age of 21 to complete 50 hours of supervised driving. The legislation would also increase the permit phase from six months to 12 months to offer teens ample time to accrue practice hours and gain vital driving experience.

"We are aiming to decrease the likelihood of a newer drivers' involvement in a fatal crash," said Senator Cruz-Perez. "With more practice behind the wheel and an extended learning period, our new drivers and all others on the road will be much safer."

Chairman Benson added, "...far too often, young drivers are involved in car crashes due to their lack of experience behind the wheel. We must take action to prevent these potentially life-threatening crashes from occurring. This measure will ensure new permit holders receive more driving practice before they hit the roads by themselves, and ultimately increase driver safety in New Jersey."

New Jersey is one of only three states (Arkansas and Missouri) that do not require teen practice hours, even though consistent training during the learning period has shown a reduction in crashes during the first year of driving.

"Traffic crashes remain one of the leading causes of death for teens. Requiring new drivers to log 50 practice hours will help reduce teen injuries and fatalities on our roads," said Lauren Paterno, Government Affairs Representative, AAA Northeast. "Fifty hours of supervised driving over the course of the one-year permit phase amounts to just 57 minutes per week. It's time for New Jersey to join 47 other states in requiring practice hours, and pass S1963/A1354 when the Legislature reconvenes in November."

A [study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#) found drivers ages 16 - 17 years old are:

- 4 times as likely as drivers 18 and older to be involved in a crash
- 2.5 times as likely as drivers 18 and older to be involved in a **fatal** crash
- 3 times as likely as drivers 30 - 59 to be involved in a **fatal** crash

"Crash risk is particularly high during the first 18-24 months of licensure for 16-19-year-olds. One of the key factors contributing to the high number of teen crashes is inexperience," said Anay Badlani. Anay has a passion for traffic safety which stems from the loss of his brother in a car crash and his desire to save lives. He is a senior at West Orange High School and President of the Youth Advisory Board for the Nikhil Badlani Foundation.

**Partners for Practice Hours is a new coalition created to fight for improved laws to increase teen driver safety. It includes:** AAA Clubs of New Jersey, Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, Allstate New Jersey Insurance Company, Amica Mutual Insurance Company, Brain Injury Alliance of NJ, Consumer Federation of America, Families for Safe Streets NJ, Farmers Insurance Group, Insurance Council of NJ, Kids and Car Safety, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) New Jersey, National Safety Council, Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, Nikhil Badlani Foundation, NJ Drivers Education Committee, NJM Insurance Group, NJ PTA, NJ Teen Safe Driving Coalition, SADD, Safe Kids Worldwide, Selective Insurance Company of America, Society of Health and Physical Educators of NJ, Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research, State Farm Insurance Companies, The Center for Auto Safety, and Vision Zero Alliance of NJ.

*The AAA Clubs of New Jersey — AAA Northeast, AAA Mid-Atlantic and AAA South Jersey—provide automotive, travel, insurance, and financial services to more than two million members through 26 offices across the state. The AAA Clubs of New Jersey are affiliated with AAA, the not-for-profit, fully tax paying federation of automobile clubs, which serves as an advocate for motorists and travelers.*