

## **New Jersey Transportation Safety Legislative Symposium**

In 2007, 724 men, women and children died on New Jersey's roadways. Over the last several years many organizations and stakeholders have come together and developed plans aimed at reducing the occurrences of crashes, injuries and deaths on New Jersey highways. These plans examined crash prevention from a multi-disciplinary approach and include the federally mandated state *Strategic Highway Safety Plan*, the *New Jersey Teen Driver Study Commission Recommendation Report* and the *Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Regional Safety Action Plan*. All of this work has promoted strategies that require legislative actions for the desired cumulative transportation safety effects. It is imperative that New Jersey state legislators be engaged in working with other stakeholders in this effort to prevent future transportation-related deaths and injuries.

On July 25, 2008 a dedicated group of safety stakeholders led by DVRPC in cooperation with the other two New Jersey Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, and the Federal Highway Administration, AAA, Mother's Against Drunk Driving and Mercer County Transportation Management Association came together to organize the New Jersey Transportation Safety Legislative Symposium. The purpose of this event was to facilitate a discussion between safety professionals and state legislators concerning several safety issues that would benefit from legislative action.

The symposium featured Bill Elliott, Transportation Safety Advocate and Founder of the "HERO CAMPAIGN" as keynote speaker. Mr. Elliott's presentation was followed by 2 panel discussions. The first panel consisted of presentations on aggressive driving, pedestrians and bicycle safety, impaired driving, and young driver's safety. The highlight of the event was the legislators' panel. The legislators discussed transportation safety issues and legislation and expressed a desire to work with the transportation safety community to reduce fatalities on the roadways. Open discussion followed with the audience of approximately eighty safety professionals and stakeholders. This was a rare opportunity for New Jersey's transportation safety professionals to engage a group of New Jersey legislators in dialogue in this type of specialized forum.

***For more information:***

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