



April 6, 2010

To: SC ADTSEA Members

From: South Carolina Driver & Traffic Safety Education Association (SCDTSEA)

Re: Please keep driver education in public high schools

Because of the hard economic times, the legislature's desire has been to cut as many services as possible. Therefore they are attempting to suspend the proviso requirement that driver education be taught in high schools for a year. This will allow the school boards and superintendents the option of cutting driver education. It has been said that leadership is seeing a problem before it becomes an emergency, and our desire is to alert parents, teachers and any other entity that this decision will impact. The fact is that parents may not be able to have their children receive driver education in high school unless they contact their legislatures, school boards and superintendents now.

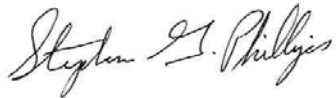
Driver education programs have partnered with parents in helping to develop proper knowledge, attitudes, and sufficient driving skills that are so vital in facing the complex traffic conditions. We know, as well as the parents, that the number one cause of teenage deaths is driving. Driver education is a course for life, helping students to drive safely throughout life. Granted, the need for reading, writing and arithmetic is obvious, but what will it profit teens if they don't know the physics of vehicles, the effect of alcohol & other drugs, the need of seat belts, etc., and end up killing themselves in vehicle crashes?

Driver education in high schools gives students the opportunity to learn more because of 30 classroom hours, whereas commercial driver training only gives 8 classroom hours. While both driver education delivery methods have their praises and critics, SCADTSEA does not support any attack on the disbandment of either high school or commercial driver education. A great driver education course develops an understanding of the tremendous responsibility of operating a motor vehicle, not merely to prepare students to pass the Driver License Test!

It is our belief that most driver educators have classroom objectives like: learning psychology in driving, understanding the importance of good vision in driving, recognizing the role of physical fitness and safety, knowing the influence of alcohol and drugs on a person, learning the traffic laws, understanding stopping and driving guidelines, understanding the differences between country and city driving, understanding characteristics of freeway driving, understanding adverse or special driving conditions, understanding the automobile engine, understanding principles in maintenance of a vehicle, purchasing a vehicle, explaining characteristics of commercial driving (knowing the economic significance of the motor vehicle in America and the degree to which our economy depends on it), recognizing traffic and engineering needs, and describing how to maneuver the vehicle.

We know that parents also believe that driver and traffic safety education is too important to learn by chance or in a haphazard way. Driver education gives the proper tools to teach teenagers to drive safely. We consider it an honor to be entrusted by parents to help educate their children. Please help save driver education in high school and help to save teenagers! Share this information with anyone who can help save driver education in High School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen G. Phillips".

Steve Phillips
President
SCDTSEA
704-569-7837