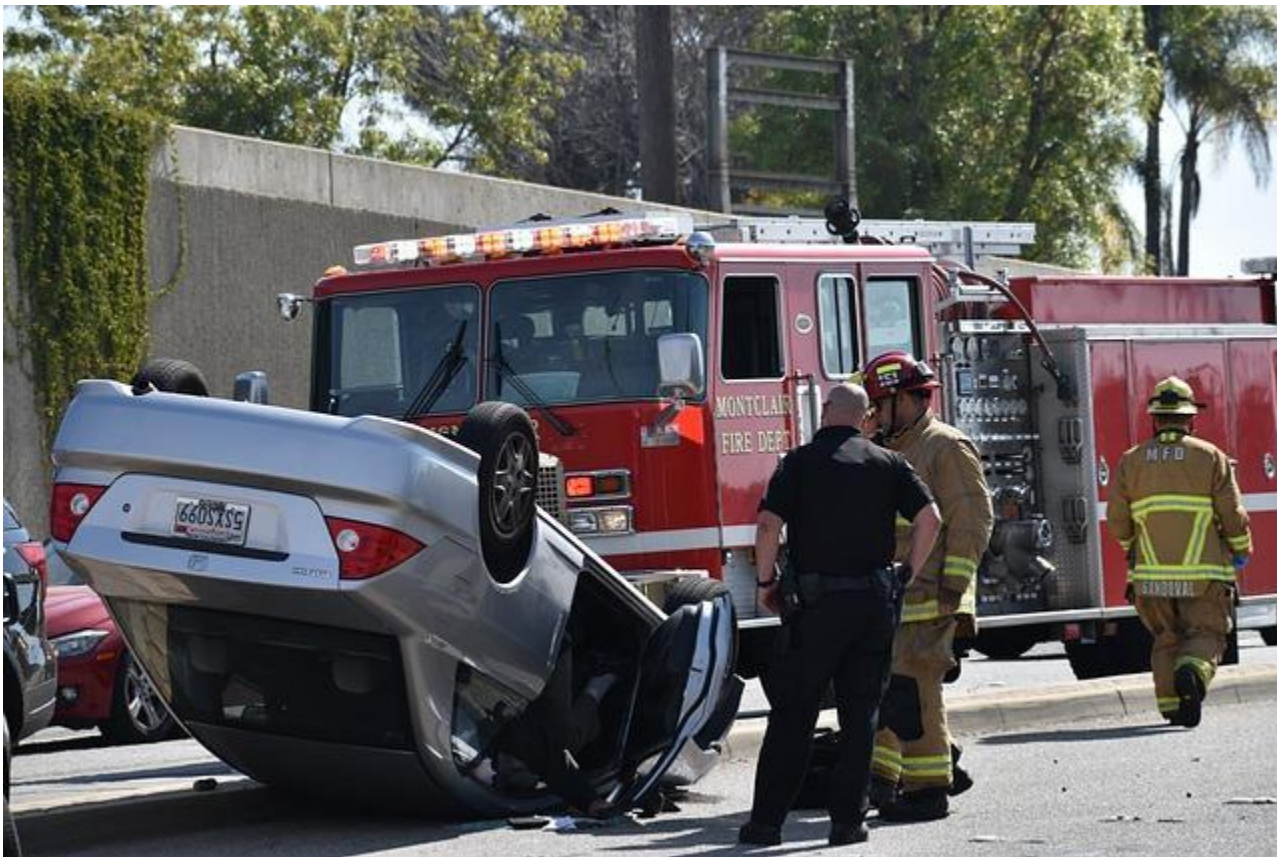


# Senate Passes Durbin, Duckworth, Bustos' Protecting Roadside First Responders Act In Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal

August 11 2021 9:23 AM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the U.S. Senate passed legislation included in the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* designed to reduce crashes involving distracted driving and prevent first responder roadside deaths.

Authored by U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and U.S. Representative Cheri Bustos (D-IL-17), the *Protecting Roadside First Responders Act* requires the implementation of life-saving, crash avoidance safety technologies including automatic emergency braking systems on all new passenger vehicles and heavy duty commercial vehicles, funds the deployment of digital alert technology for first responders, and increases public awareness of “Move Over” laws.

“Every year, too many Illinois families mourn the loss of loved ones to distracted driving and roadside incidents,” said Durbin. “I am pleased to see passage of the *Protecting Roadside First Responders Act* as part of the bipartisan infrastructure deal today, knowing that this legislation can save lives with new crash avoidance technologies and greater awareness of ‘Move Over’ laws.”

“The troubling pattern of first responder roadside deaths demanded action and the Senate answered the call by including provisions of our legislation in the bipartisan compromise,” said Duckworth. “While there is more work to be done, I’m proud to have worked with Senator Durbin and Congresswoman Bustos on this effort to help increase awareness of ‘Move Over’ laws and invest in innovative, life-saving technologies that reduce risk and better protect our first responders.”

“To protect our first responders and prevent further tragedies along our major roads and highways, we must increase awareness of our ‘Move Over’ laws and implement critical crash avoidance technology,” Bustos said. “I’m pleased the Senate included our *Protecting Roadside First Responders Act* in their bipartisan infrastructure package to help do just that. As the wife of a sheriff, I’m grateful for the work our first responders do every day and I thank Senators Durbin and Duckworth for partnering on these efforts.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), every day about eight people in the U.S. are killed in crashes involving a distracted driver. This amounts to roughly 3,000 deaths and 400,000 injuries each year from distracted driving. About one in five of those deaths involve people outside a vehicle such as pedestrians, cyclists, and roadside first responders—which has made roadway accidents the leading cause of officer-line-of-duty deaths nationwide.

Over the last three decades, every major surface transportation bill signed into law has advanced new technologies resulting in significant public safety improvements such as airbags, electronic stability control to prevent rollovers, and seat belts. These advances have garnered bipartisan support and saved tens of thousands of lives. In fact, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that between 1960 and 2012, more than 600,000 lives have been saved by motor vehicle safety

technologies. The inclusion of the *Protecting Roadside First Responders Act* in the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* is the latest example of bipartisan support for advancing new vehicle safety technologies that will save lives, requiring automatic emergency braking systems and other advanced-driver assistance systems in new vehicles.