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SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey

VOLUME 2

Seat Belt Report

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16. Abstract <p>The 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey was the sixth in a series of periodic national telephone surveys on occupant protection issues conducted for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Data collection was conducted by Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc., a national survey research organization. The survey used two questionnaires, each administered to a randomly selected national sample of about 6,000 persons age 16 or older. Interviewing began January 9, 2007 and ended April 30, 2007. This report presents the survey findings pertaining to seat belts. Detailed information on the survey methodology, as well as copies of the questionnaires, are contained in a separate NHTSA report ("2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. Volume 1. Methodology Report").</p> <p>The passenger car remains the most common primary vehicle driven by adults (54%), although the percentage has continued to drop as SUVs (17%) have increased in frequency. The predominant type of seat belt in the front seat of vehicles is the one-piece manual lap and shoulder system (83%). Drivers increasingly are reporting that they have adjustable shoulder belts (58%). Eighty-eight percent of drivers said they wore their seat belt "all of the time" while driving, but 6% of those immediately said that they did not use a seat belt while driving at least once in the past day or week. Reported belt use traditionally is higher than observed belt use, although the demographic patterns tend to be the same. Reported seat belt use was lower among males, drivers age 16-24, drivers in rural areas, pickup truck drivers, drivers who engage in other risky driving behaviors, and drivers in secondary enforcement States. Drivers most often cited injury avoidance as their most important reason for using seat belts (64%). Part-time belt users substantially outnumbered those who reported never wearing seat belts, and their primary reasons for non-use were driving just a short distance and forgetting. Eighty-eight percent of the public favored laws that require drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts, 67% favored primary enforcement and 68% favored fines for drivers who do not wear seat belts.</p>					
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey (MVOSS) was the sixth in a series of periodic national telephone surveys on occupant protection issues conducted for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Data collection was conducted by the firm Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalas, Inc. (SRBI), a national survey research organization. The survey employed two questionnaires, each administered to a randomly selected national sample of approximately 6,000 persons age 16 and older (with younger ages oversampled). Interviewing began January 9, 2007 and ended April 30, 2007.

This report presents the survey findings pertaining to seat belts. The data are weighted to yield national estimates. Readers are cautioned that some subgroup analyses (indicated in the body of the report) are based on a small number of cases. Technical information on confidence intervals is presented in Appendix A so that readers may judge the precision of sample estimates. A full description of the methodology, and the questionnaires, is presented in a separate report.

Vehicle Characteristics

- **Motor Vehicle Use.** About 88% of persons age 16 and older drive a motor vehicle. Certain demographic groups had far higher percentages of non-drivers than the national average, such as Blacks¹ (23%), Hispanics (30%), teenagers (24%), and persons in low-income households (34% in households under \$15,000).
- **Vehicle Type.** Passenger cars continued to drop as a percentage of the vehicle fleet, although they still accounted for 54% of all primary vehicles driven (versus 71% in 1994). Pickup trucks (18%), SUVs (17%), and vans/minivans (9%) followed next in frequency.

Seat belt Use

- **Type Of Belt.** Slightly more than four-fifths (83%) of primary vehicles had one-piece manual lap and shoulder belts in the driver seat. In vehicles having a shoulder belt, 58% had adjustable shoulder belts. While some of the persons with adjustable belts (32%) said that they had never tried to adjust their adjustable shoulder belt, those who did usually said that they were able to make the belt more comfortable (94%).
- **Reported Belt Use.** When asked how often they used their lap and shoulder seat belts while driving, close to nine-in-ten (88%) of drivers said “all of the time”. However, on a follow-up question, 6% of these “all of the time” users immediately stated that they had not worn their seat belt while driving at some time during the past day or week. Seven percent of drivers said they used their seat belt “most of the time” while driving. Seventy percent of these “most of the time” users said on the follow-up question that they had not worn their seat belt while driving at some time during the past day or week.

¹ The category used on the racial background question since the 1994 baseline survey is “Black or African American”.

- **Reported Belt Use By Seat Belt System.** Among those seat belt systems not having an automatic component, reported “all of the time” use was lowest among lap only systems (77%) and highest among one-piece lap and shoulder systems (88%). Among two-piece belt systems where the shoulder belt was always being used, drivers were much more likely to use their lap belt “all of the time” if the shoulder belt was manual (92%) rather than automatic (68%).
- **Reported Belt Use By Demographics.** Reported “all of the time” use by drivers tended to be lower among males (85%), drivers ages 16-24 (81%), pickup truck drivers (79%), and drivers in rural areas (80%).
- **Seat Belt Use On The Job.** About one-third of drivers (35%) said they drove a motor vehicle at least sometimes as part of a job or business. Most drove as part of a job or business almost every day (52%) or a few days a week (25%). A majority of these drivers (56%) reported that their company had a policy requiring seat belt use when driving on the job. Drivers were more likely to report higher seat belt use on the job compared to personal driving if they thought their company had a seat belt policy (21% versus 14%). For driving in general (among drivers who at least on occasion drove on the job), the percentage of drivers who reported wearing seat belts “all of the time” was higher among those who thought their company had a seat belt policy than those who did not (87% versus 81%).
- **Seat Belt Use By Seating Position.** Reported seat belt use was lower in the back passenger seating positions compared to the driver and front passenger seating positions. Whereas more than four-fifths of respondents said they always wore their seat belt when driving (88%) or riding as a passenger in the front seat (86%), a little less than six-in-ten (58%) said they always wore the belt when riding as a passenger in the back seat.

Reasons For Seat belt Use And Non-Use

- **Reasons For Use.** Drivers were asked to identify all the reasons why they wore seat belts. Injury avoidance was the most frequent reason given regardless of frequency of belt use. However, infrequent seat belt users (66%) gave this as a reason less often than frequent seat belt users (96%).
- **Most Important Reason For Use.** When drivers were asked for the most important reason for wearing seat belts, about two-thirds (64%) said it was injury avoidance. Infrequent users of seat belts (40%) were less likely than frequent users (65%) to report injury avoidance as their primary reason for seat belt use.
- **Reasons For Non-Use.** Among drivers who at least on occasion did not use their seat belt, the most frequent reasons for non-use were that they were only driving a short distance (59%), they forgot (52%), they were in a rush (39%), or they found the belt uncomfortable (35%).
- **Most Important Reason For Non-Use.** The most important reasons given by drivers for not wearing seat belts were usually that they were driving just a short distance (27%) or

they forgot (22%). These two reasons were characteristic of part-time seat belt users, who substantially outnumbered drivers who rarely or never wore their seat belts.

- **Annoyances From Seat Belts.** All drivers, whether or not they wore seat belts regularly, were asked if there was anything they particularly disliked or found annoying about wearing them. Almost one-third (30%) answered “yes,” with females (35%) more likely to respond affirmatively than males (26%). The most common complaint involved pressure or pain on parts of the body (37%). Females who were annoyed by seat belts particularly expressed this type of discomfort (44%), especially being choked by the seat belt (35%).

Attitudes About The Utility Of Seat Belts, Risk Perception, And Fatalism

- **Would Want Seat Belt On In Crash.** The vast majority of the public (95%) age 16 and older either strongly (87%) or somewhat (8%) agreed with the statement “If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.” As reported seat belt use increased, so did agreement with the statement.
- **Perceived Harm From Seat Belts.** More than one-third of the public (34%) either strongly (14%) or somewhat (21%) agreed with the statement “Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.” As reported seat belt use decreased, agreement with the statement increased.
- **Anxiety From Seat Belts.** Relatively few people (15%) agreed strongly (9%) or somewhat (6%) that “Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.” Agreement with this statement was expressed more often by persons who only sometimes (23%) or rarely/never (22%) wore their seat belt.
- **Accidents Happen Close To Home.** Four-in-five persons (80%) either strongly (55%) or somewhat (25%) agreed that “Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.” There was little difference across levels of reported seat belt use.
- **Seriousness Of Crashes Close To Home.** Relatively few people (16%) strongly (8%) or somewhat (9%) agreed “An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.”
- **Pressure From Group Norms.** About one-in-five persons (21%) either strongly (14%) or somewhat (7%) agreed that “I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.” Persons who wore their seat belt only some of the time (25%) were most likely to agree with the statement across levels of reported belt use.
- **Parental Influence On Seat Belt Use.** Among persons ages 16-24, 80% either strongly (62%) or somewhat (18%) agreed that “I have a habit of wearing a seat belt because my parents insisted I wear them when I was a child.” The percentage who agreed dropped to 59% among persons ages 25-34, and 33% among those ages 35-44, reflecting the lower belt use rates during their childhood years for these age cohorts.

- **Fatalism And Seat Belt Use.** The fatalistic belief that wearing seat belts did not matter because “If it is your time to die, you’ll die” was more prevalent among drivers who reported less frequent seat belt usage: 23% among “all of the time” users, 31% among “most of the time” users, 54% among “some of the time” users, and 60% among those who rarely or never wore seat belts.
- **Differences In Attitude By Age.** More than two-fifths (44%) of 16-20 year-olds agreed that seat belts were as likely to harm as to help, compared to 34% of those 21 to 64 and 31% of those 65 and older. The youngest age group also was more likely to agree that an accident close to home was usually not as serious (28%), that putting on a seat belt makes them worry more about being in an accident (26%), and that they would feel self-conscious if they were going against the group norm in wearing seat belts (27%).
- **Differences In Attitudes By Race/Ethnicity.** Blacks and Hispanics differed markedly from Whites and non-Hispanics on perceived risk and the utility of seat belts. Whereas less than one-third of Whites (30%) and non-Hispanics (32%) agreed that seat belts were as likely to harm as help, about one-half of Blacks (49%) and Hispanics (51%) agreed. Blacks and Hispanics also were more likely than Whites and non-Hispanics to agree that putting on a seat belt made them worry more about being in a crash, or that a crash close to home would not be as serious as one farther away. Hispanics (37%) and Blacks (28%) were more likely than the other groups to say they would feel self-conscious about using seat belts if their friends did not. Blacks (37%) and Hispanics (34%) were more likely than Whites (23%) and non-Hispanics (25%) to agree with the fatalistic statement that wearing a seat belt did not matter because if it was your time to die, you’ll die.
- **Differences In Attitudes By Education.** Persons who had more years of formal schooling tended to be less fatalistic, less ambivalent about the injury reduction benefits of seat belts, and less self-conscious about going against group norms of non-use.

Attitudes, Knowledge, And Experience With Seat Belt Laws And Their Enforcement

- **Support For Front Seat Seat Belt Laws.** The vast majority of the public (88%) favored seat belt laws for front seat occupants either “a lot” (71%) or “some” (17%). More females (92%) than males (84%) voiced support for front seat seat belt laws. Blacks (93%) and Hispanics (95%) were more likely to express support than Whites (87%) and non-Hispanics (88%).
- **Support For Back Seat Seat Belt Laws.** Among persons who supported front seat seat belt laws, 83% also supported applying seat belt laws to back seat adult passengers. Of the total population age 16 and older, 73% supported laws for adults in both the front and back seats.
- **Support For Fines/Points.** Two-thirds (68%) of the population age 16 and older supported fines for drivers who did not wear seat belts. About half that many (32%) supported points against the license as a penalty. Among persons who supported fines, most (60%) favored a fine of \$50 or more.
- **Knowledge Of Who Is Covered By The Law.** Almost everyone (94%) believed his/her State had a law requiring seat belt use. They most often thought the law covered drivers (98%), children in the front (93%), and adult passengers in the front (95%). Many thought the law in their State also covered children in the back (88%). More than half (54%) assumed that adults were required to wear seat belts in the back seat.
- **Awareness Of (Primary/Secondary) Enforcement Provisions In Their State.** Seat belt laws contain either primary enforcement provisions (i.e., law enforcement officers can stop a vehicle on the basis of observing a seat belt violation) or secondary enforcement provisions (i.e., some other violation must be observed before stopping a vehicle). At the time of the survey, 25 States plus the District of Columbia had primary enforcement laws, 24 States had secondary enforcement laws, and 1 State did not have a seat belt law applicable to adults. Among those who believed their State had a seat belt law (94%), 70% thought the law permitted primary enforcement. About three-fourths (76%) of the total population in primary enforcement States believed their State had a seat belt law that included primary enforcement provisions. In secondary enforcement States, there were almost twice as many persons who believed their State law had primary enforcement provisions (49%) than thought it had secondary enforcement provisions (28%).
- **Enforcement Provisions And Reported Seat Belt Use.** Drivers were more likely to report that they wore their seat belt “all of the time” while driving if they resided in States having primary enforcement provisions (91%), as opposed to secondary enforcement provisions (85%). The difference in “all of the time” use was similar when comparing drivers who believed their State seat belt law permitted primary enforcement (89%) to those who believed their State law called for secondary enforcement (85%).
- **Support For Primary Enforcement.** Overall, 67% of the population believed that police should be allowed to stop a vehicle if they observed a seat belt violation when no other traffic laws were being broken, compared to 64% in 2003. Support was greater among

females (71%), Blacks (69%), and Hispanics (78%). As expected, support was higher in primary enforcement States (73%). But even in secondary enforcement States, the majority (58%) favored primary enforcement.

- **Stopped By Police In Past Year For Traffic Related Reason.** About one-in-six drivers (16%) said they had been stopped by police for a traffic-related reason in the past year, more often males (19%) than females (13%). Traffic-related stops for the general population of drivers peaked at ages 21-24 (28%), and then declined across subsequent age groups. Drivers usually said they were wearing seat belts when stopped (87%). More than half (64%) of all drivers stopped by the police received some type of ticket.
- **Previously Received A Ticket/Warning For A Seat Belt Violation.** About 14% of the population age 16 and older had received a ticket and/or warning some time in the past for violating seat belt laws (8% had received a ticket only, 2% had received both a ticket and a warning, and 4% had received only a warning). In States with primary enforcement provisions, 15% had received a ticket and/or warning, compared to 12% in secondary enforcement States. When asked if their frequency of seat belt use had changed after receiving the seat belt ticket or warning, 62% said they started using their seat belt more often. However, the current level of belt use reported by drivers who had received a ticket or warning was still below that of drivers who had never received either.
- **Perceived Risk Of Personally Being Ticketed.** Half (50%) of drivers considered it very (24%) or somewhat (27%) likely that they would receive a ticket if they did not wear their seat belt at all while driving over the next six months. The perceived risk of being ticketed was higher among drivers in primary enforcement States, and higher among drivers who tended to wear their seat belt more often. Among demographic groups, Hispanics (67%) and Blacks (58%) were more likely than others to perceive themselves at risk of being ticketed.
- **Perceived Emphasis On Ticketing For Seat Belt Violations By Local Police.** The public was more likely to disagree (41%) than agree (36%) with the statement “Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations.” Many people (22%) said they did not know. Agreement that police don’t bother to write tickets was more likely in secondary enforcement States (42%) than primary enforcement States (33%), and more likely among infrequent than frequent seat belt users.
- **Preferred Level Of Enforcement Activity.** When asked to rate on a 10-point scale how strictly they believed the police should enforce seat belt laws, the public’s response was mixed. They most often picked a value of “10” (29%) meaning “Police should give tickets at every opportunity,” although responses also clustered at the middle and low end of the scale. The average score was 6.6, but higher among females (6.9) than males (6.2), Blacks (6.8) than Whites (6.4), and Hispanics (7.6) than non-Hispanics (6.4).

Comparison To Prior Year Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Surveys

- **General Stability In Findings.** In many areas, the 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey found circumstances essentially unchanged from its predecessors:
 - The percentage of drivers who drive on the job (35%) has remained stable since 1994 (34%-36%).
 - In 2007, 6% of drivers who said they wear seat belts “all of the time” also said that they did not wear seat belts while driving in the past day or week. This is close to what was obtained in the previous years (7% to 10%).
 - About two-thirds of drivers (64% in 2007, 64%-68% in earlier years) continued to point to injury avoidance as their most important reason for wearing seat belts.
 - Forgetting (22%) and driving only a short distance (27%) continued as the most important reasons for non-use of seat belts, with similar percentages to previous years.
 - Persons who said they rarely or never wore their seat belts continued to be substantially outnumbered by part-time seat belt users (i.e., persons who reported wearing seat belts more often than rarely, but also admitting some non-use). As in previous years, the survey found reasons for non-use to differ between part-time users and rare/never users, with “forgetting” and “only driving a short distance” more characteristic of part-time users while rare/never users tended to refer to “discomfort” and “other” reasons.
 - There has been little change in attitudes concerning the utility of seat belts, and associated perceptions of risk, since those questions were introduced in 1998.
 - Since 1994, more than 80% of the public has favored seat belt laws that apply to the front seat. The percentage favoring laws that also apply to the back seat has slowly climbed since 1996 (64%), reaching 73% in 2007. Support for fines has ranged from 60% to 68%, while support for points as a sanction has ranged from 30% to 32%.
 - The percentage of the population aware that their State has a seat belt law remained unchanged since 1994 at 94%.
- **Changing Equipment.** The 2007 survey detected a continuation of change in the vehicle fleet and restraint systems used:
 - Among drivers’ primary vehicles, passenger cars continued to decrease as a proportion of the vehicle fleet (71% in 1994; 54% in 2007) while SUVs increased (3% in 1994; 17% in 2007).
 - There was a small but continued increase in one-piece manual lap and shoulder systems in the front seat of drivers’ primary vehicles (70% in 1994; 83% in 2007), with this being by far the predominant restraint system.
 - Adjustable shoulder belts continued their penetration of the vehicle fleet (36% in 1996; 58% in 2007).

- **Increasing Use Of Seat Belts.** There has been a steady rise in reported use of seat belts:
 - The percentage of drivers who reported wearing their seat belt “all of the time” when they drive has increased from 74% in 1994 to 76% in 1996 to 79% in 1998 to 83% in 2000 to 84% in 2003 to 88% in 2007.
 - “All of the time” seat belt use by front seat passengers increased from 73% in 1996 to 86% in 2007.
 - Reported “all of the time” seat belt use in the back seat also increased, rising from 37% in 1996 to 58% in 2007.
 - The percentage of drivers reporting that there is something they dislike or find annoying about their seat belt has declined by one-to-three percentage points with each subsequent survey, from 40% in 1994 to 30% in 2007.

- **Increasing Acceptance Of Primary Enforcement.** The number of States with seat belts laws that contain provisions permitting primary enforcement has increased substantially since the survey was first administered, reaching 25 at the time of the 2007 survey. Consistent with that increase:
 - The percentage of the population who believe their State law permits primary enforcement has steadily increased, reaching 70% in 2007 from 49% in 1994.
 - Support for primary enforcement has also steadily increased, from 52% in 1996 (when the question was first asked) to 67% in 2007.

- **Greater Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed.** There were continuing trends in the implications that persons saw for themselves personally with respect to enforcement:
 - Since 1996, the percentage of drivers who considered it somewhat or very likely that they would be ticketed if they did not wear their seat belt at all while driving over the next six months has increased from 33% in 1996 to 39% in 1998 to 42% in 2000 to 46% in 2003 to 50% in 2007.
 - The percentage of the population of drivers who believed their likely reaction to receiving a ticket would be that they deserved it, rather than that they did not deserve it, has increased by 1 to 4 percentage points with each subsequent survey, reaching 75% in 2007.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey is conducted on a periodic basis for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). It is a national telephone survey composed of two questionnaires, each administered to several thousand randomly selected persons age 16 and older. The Version 1 Questionnaire emphasizes seat belt issues while Version 2 emphasizes child restraint issues. The questionnaires also contain smaller modules addressing such topics as air bags, emergency medical services, and crash injury experience. For the 2007 survey, each questionnaire was administered to approximately 6,000 individuals.

NHTSA conducted the first Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey in 1994. Subsequent versions of the survey have included modest revisions to reflect changes in information needs. Thus, the 2007 survey contained numerous items from the earlier surveys allowing the agency to monitor change over time in knowledge, attitudes, and (reported) behavior related to motor vehicle occupant safety. The 2007 survey also included new questions dealing with night time driving, driver education, and graduated driver licensing.

The following report presents findings from the 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey pertaining to seat belts. Specifically, it explores the following areas: 1) 2007 seat belt use; 2) reasons for seat belt use and non-use; 3) attitudes concerning the utility of seat belts, and 4) attitudes, knowledge, and experience with seat belt laws and their enforcement. A fifth section examines trends between 1994 and 2007 on selected seat belt issues.

Methodology

The 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey was conducted by Schulman, Ronca, & Bucuvalas, Inc. (SRBI), a national survey research organization. SRBI conducted a total of 11,918 telephone interviews among a nationally representative sample of individuals 16 and older. To reduce the burden on respondents, the survey employed two questionnaires. A total of 5,908 interviews were completed with Version 1 and 6,010 interviews were completed with Version 2. Although some questions appeared in both versions (e.g., demographics, crash injury experience, seat belt use), each questionnaire had its own set of distinct topics. Each sample was composed of a cross-sectional sample of approximately 4,500 persons 16 and older, and an over-sample of approximately 1,500 persons ages 16 through 39. The procedures used in the survey yielded national estimates of the target population within specified limits of expected sampling variability, from which valid generalizations can be made to the general public.

The survey was conducted from January 9, 2007 to April 30, 2007. For a complete description of the methodology and sample disposition, including computation of weights, refer to the 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey, Volume I. Methodology Report. The report includes English and Spanish language versions of the questionnaires.

The percentages presented in this report are weighted to reflect accurately the national population age 16 and older. Unweighted sample sizes (“N”s) are included so that readers know the exact number of respondents answering a given question, allowing them to estimate sampling precision (see Appendix A for related technical information).

Percentages for some items may not add to 100 percent due to rounding, or because the question allowed for more than one response. In addition, the number of cases involved in subgroup analyses may not sum to the grand total who responded to the primary questionnaire item being analyzed. Reasons for this include some form of nonresponse on the grouping variable (e.g., “Don’t Know” or “Refused”), or use of only selected subgroups in the analysis. Moreover, if one of the variables involved in the subgroup analysis appeared on both versions of the questionnaire but the other(s) appeared on only one questionnaire, then the subgroup analysis was restricted to data from only one version of the questionnaire.

The survey employed two questions to categorize cases for subgroup analyses involving race and ethnicity. The first asked respondents if they considered themselves to be Hispanic or Latino. Those who said “Yes” composed the Hispanic analytic subgroup in the study, those who said “No” composed a non-Hispanic comparison group. The second question was treated independently of the ethnicity question, i.e., it was asked of every respondent. The interviewers recited several different racial categories, and asked respondents which categories described them. Respondents could select more than one. For purposes of analysis, a respondent was assigned to a specific racial category if s/he selected only that category. The few respondents who selected multiple categories (219 out of more than 11,000 cases) were analyzed as a separate multi-racial group. Because race and ethnicity were considered independently, each racial group could include both Hispanics and non-Hispanics, and the Hispanic analytic group included both Blacks and Whites.

The abbreviations DK and Ref are frequently listed as response categories in the report. DK stands for “Don’t Know” and Ref stands for “Refused”. For most questions, the persons who answered “Don’t Know” vastly outnumbered those who refused to answer the question.

2007 SURVEY RESULTS

CHAPTER 1: SEAT BELT USE

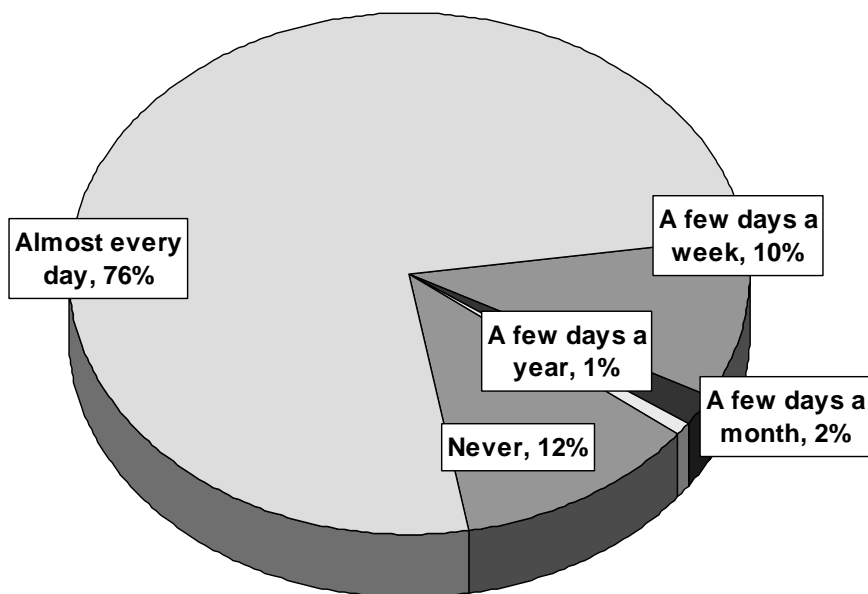
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Prior to collecting detailed information on seat belt use, the survey asked respondents if they were drivers, and if so, what type of vehicle they most often drove. Drivers were then asked about the seat belt configuration in that vehicle. Only then did the survey query respondents about their seat belt use, defining it as usage **while driving their usual vehicle**. The questionnaire flow was designed to maximize consistency by giving all respondents a standard definition to use when discussing their belt use behavior.

Drivers And Vehicles

Almost nine-in-ten (88%) persons age 16 and older drive a motor vehicle. Three-in-four (76%) do so almost every day.

**Figure 1
Driving Frequency**



Qx: How often do you drive a motor vehicle? Almost every day, a few days a week, a few days a month, a few days a year, or do you never drive?

Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=11918

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

There were proportionally fewer drivers among the youngest and oldest age groups, racial and ethnic minorities (see page xx for group definitions), females and low-income households.

Table 1
Driving Frequency By Demographic Characteristics

Qx: How often do you drive a motor vehicle? Almost every day, a few days a week, a few days a month, a few days a year, or do you never drive?

Base: Total population age 16+.

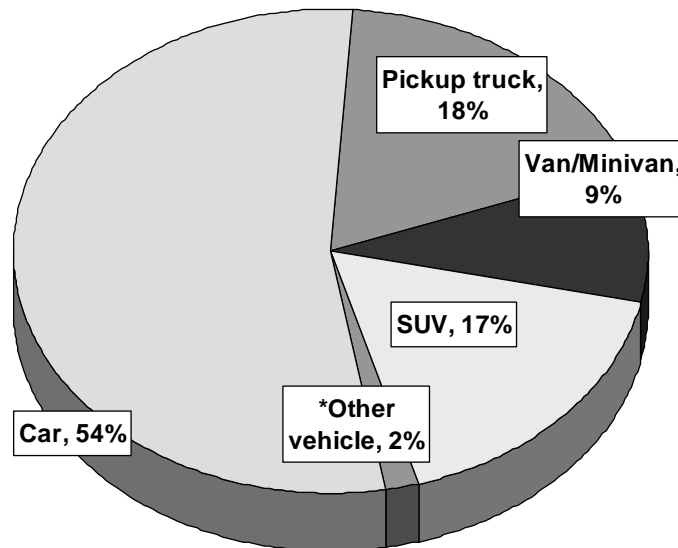
	Unweighted N	Almost every day	A few days a week	A few days a month	A few days a year	Never ⁺
Age						
16-20	(695)	55%	14%	5%	1%	24%
21-24	(469)	70%	7%	2%	*	20%
25-34	(2105)	80%	7%	1%	1%	12%
35-44	(2556)	87%	5%	1%	1%	7%
45-54	(2223)	87%	5%	1%	*	6%
55-64	(1674)	81%	10%	1%	*	7%
65+	(1977)	61%	20%	3%	1%	14%
Gender						
Male	(5494)	81%	8%	2%	*	9%
Female	(6424)	70%	12%	2%	1%	15%
Race						
Black	(1162)	63%	11%	2%	1%	23%
White	(8873)	80%	10%	2%	*	7%
Asian	(244)	72%	13%	2%	*	14%
Native American/ Alaskan Native	(203)	74%	9%	4%	3%	10%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	(46)	64%	15%	3%	1%	18%
Multi-race	(219)	72%	9%	3%	3%	12%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	(1293)	59%	7%	3%	1%	30%
Non-Hispanic	(10475)	79%	10%	2%	1%	9%
Income						
<\$15,000	(1159)	44%	16%	5%	2%	34%
\$15,000-29,999	(1586)	65%	13%	2%	*	19%
\$30,000-49,999	(2173)	79%	10%	2%	*	8%
\$50,000-74,999	(2045)	87%	7%	1%	*	4%
\$75,000-99,999	(1365)	90%	6%	1%	*	2%
>\$100,000	(1844)	91%	5%	1%	*	2%

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases. + Includes persons who said more than a year ago.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Many households have more than one motor vehicle. Since the type of safety equipment may vary from one vehicle to another, drivers were asked about the vehicle that they drive most often. Slightly more than half of drivers (54%) use a car as their primary vehicle, followed by 18% who drive a pickup truck, 17% who drive a sport utility vehicle (SUV), and 9% who drive a van or minivan.

Figure 2
Primary Vehicle Driven



Qx: Is the vehicle you drive most often a car, van, motorcycle, sport utility vehicle, pickup truck, or other type of truck?

Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

Unweighted N=10703

*Includes 1.1% other trucks, 0.4% motorcycles, 0.2% other, and 0.1% Not sure/Refused.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The survey posed a series of questions to determine the type of seat belt installed in the front seat of the respondent's primary vehicle. The initial question asked whether it was a lap belt, shoulder belt, or both.

Seat belts in 93% of primary vehicles went across both the lap and shoulder. Differences were relatively small across vehicle types. Only 12 vehicles out of more than 10,000 reportedly had no seat belts in the front seat.

Table 2
Seat Belt Configuration By Type Of Primary Vehicle

Qx: For the next series of questions, please answer only for the (car/truck/van) you said you usually drive. Do the seat belts in the front seat of the (car/truck/van) go across your shoulder only, across your lap only, or across both your shoulder and lap?

Base: Vehicle driven most often is not a motorcycle.

Seat Belt Position	Total	Car	Van/Minivan	SUV	Pickup truck
	(N=**10673)	(N=5837)	(N=974)	(N=1976)	(N=1749)
Across shoulder only	6%	7%	6%	4%	5%
Across lap only	1%	*	1%	*	1%
Across both	93%	92%	94%	96%	93%
Vehicle has no belts	*	*	*	*	1%
Not sure/Refused	*	*	--	*	*

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases. **Includes 100 other trucks, 22 other vehicles, and 15 not sure or didn't respond to vehicle type.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

If the front seat seat belt went across both the shoulder and lap, the survey asked if it was one-piece or two separate belts and if the seat belts were automatic. Table 3 shows that 83% of front seat seat belts (in primary vehicles) were one-piece manual lap/shoulder systems. Relatively few seat belts (7%) had an automatic component, whether one-piece or two-piece. In addition, 7% of those with automatic belts said that they at least sometimes disconnected, disabled, or placed the belt behind them.

The results also suggested that some people may not fully understand their belt system. Dozens of respondents answered “Not Sure” to one or more basic belt configuration questions. In addition, two-piece lap/shoulder belts where both belts were automatic are not known to exist in the vehicle fleet (i.e., automatic lap belts have not been installed into production vehicles).

Table 3
Type Of Driver Seat Belt In Primary Vehicle

- Qx: *Do the seat belts in the front seat of the (car/truck/van) go across your shoulder only, across your lap only, or across both your shoulder and your lap?*
- Qx: *Are the shoulder and lap belt one piece or are they two separate belts?*
- Qx: *Are both the shoulder and lap belt automatic, is only the shoulder belt automatic or is neither the shoulder or lap belt automatic?*
- Qx: *Is the shoulder belt automatic or do you have to fasten it?*
- Base: *Vehicle driven most often has seat belts.*

N	Belt system type	Description	Percent
10089	One-piece systems	Only one buckle	95%
65	Lap belt only	One belt that goes across the driver's lap.	1%
8898	Lap/shoulder-manual	Combination system that must be pulled and buckled by the driver.	83%
460	Lap/shoulder-automatic	Combination system that automatically fastens around the driver.	4%
601	Shoulder only-manual	One belt that goes across the driver's shoulder that must be pulled and buckled by the driver.	5%
50	Shoulder only-automatic	One belt that automatically fastens across the driver's shoulder.	1%
15	One-piece-NS/Ref	One-piece, don't know if automatic/refused to say.	*
483	Two-piece systems	Two separate buckles for lap and shoulder belts.	5%
271	Lap manual/ shoulder manual	Driver must pull and fasten each belt separately.	3%
153	Lap manual/ shoulder automatic	Belt automatically fastens across driver's shoulder but driver must pull and fasten lap belt.	2%
52	Lap automatic/ shoulder automatic	Each belt automatically fastens around the driver	*
7	Two-piece-NS/Ref	Two-piece, not sure if automatic.	*
89	Not sure	Not sure where belts cross, or if one-piece or two-piece	1%

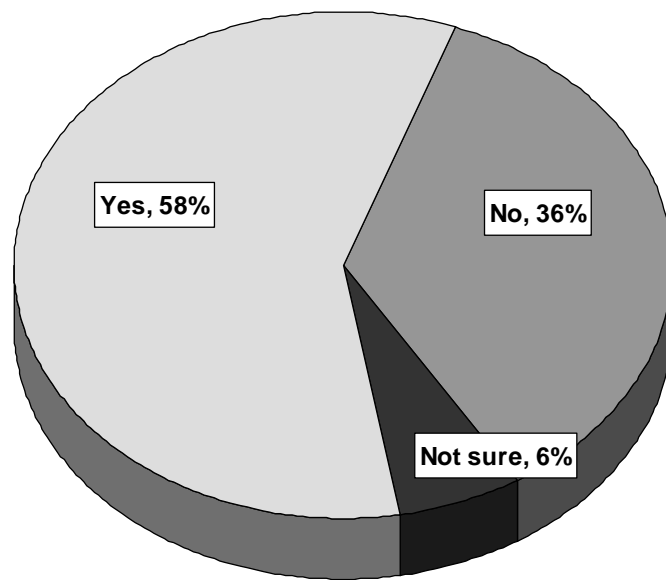
*Less than 0.5%.

Adjustable Shoulder Belt

Drivers were asked if their shoulder belts were adjustable (i.e., their attachment to the door or frame behind the driver's left shoulder can be moved up or down). This adjustment of the shoulder strap allows for a more comfortable fit.

More than half of all drivers said their shoulder belt was adjustable (58%) while 36% of drivers said that it was not. A small percentage (6%) said they were not sure.

**Figure 3
Have Adjustable Shoulder Belt**



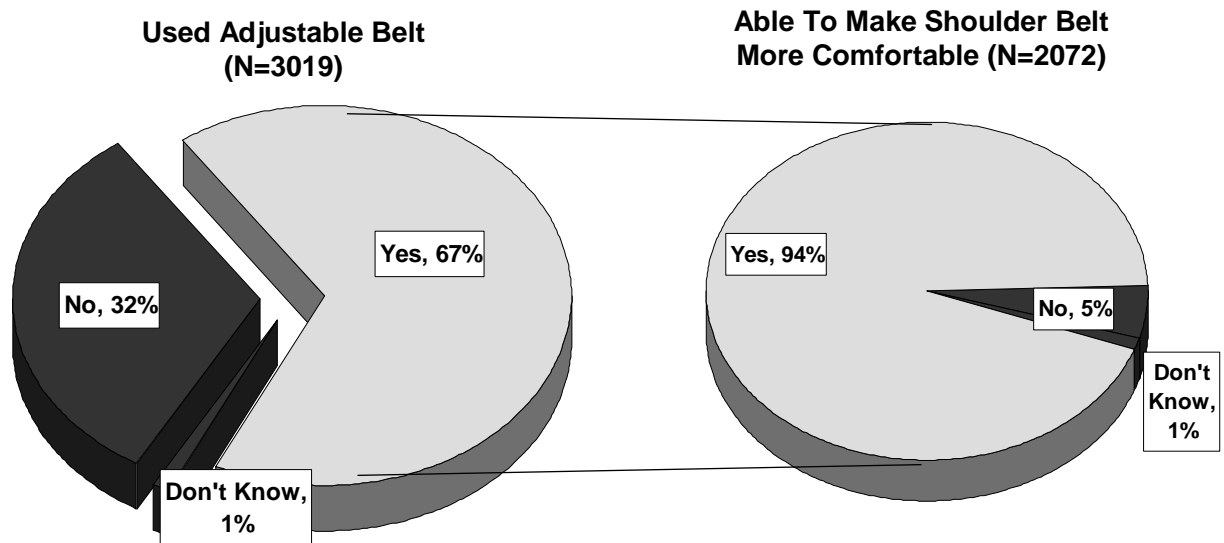
Qx: Shoulder belts are usually attached to the door or frame behind the driver's left shoulder. In some vehicles, this attachment can be moved up or down to adjust the shoulder belt. Is this attachment adjustable in your vehicle?

Base: Vehicle has seat belts across both lap and shoulder or across shoulder only.

Unweighted N=5245

Almost seven in ten drivers (67%) with adjustable shoulder belts said they had tried to adjust them. More than nine in ten (94%) said their adjustments made the belts more comfortable.

Figure 4
Effectiveness Of Adjustable Shoulder Belts



Qx: Have you ever tried to adjust it?

Qx: Were you able to make the shoulder belt more comfortable by adjusting it?

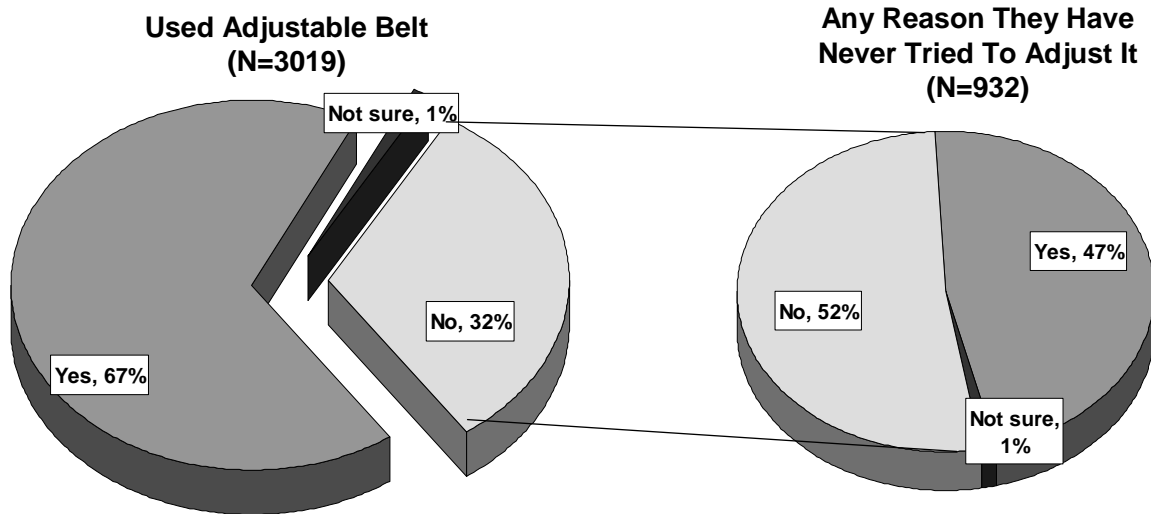
Base: Pie1: Vehicle has adjustable shoulder belts.

Pie 2: Tried to adjust belt.

Unweighted N's listed above.

About one-third (32%) of drivers did not use the adjustable feature on their shoulder belts. Over half of them (52%) said there was no particular reason why they have never tried to use it. Those that gave a reason usually said it was because the belt already fit satisfactorily (see Table 4).

Figure 5
Any Reason Why They Have Never Tried To Adjust The Shoulder Belt



Qx: Have you ever tried to adjust it?

Qx: Is there any reason why you have never tried to adjust it?

Base: Pie 1: Vehicle has adjustable shoulder belts.

Pie 2: Never tried to adjust belt.

Unweighted N's listed above.

Table 4
Reasons Why Drivers Have Never Tried To Adjust
The Adjustable Feature On Their Shoulder Belt

Qx: What is the reason?

Base: Drivers with adjustable shoulder belts who said they never tried to adjust them, and said there was a reason why they had never tried to adjust them.

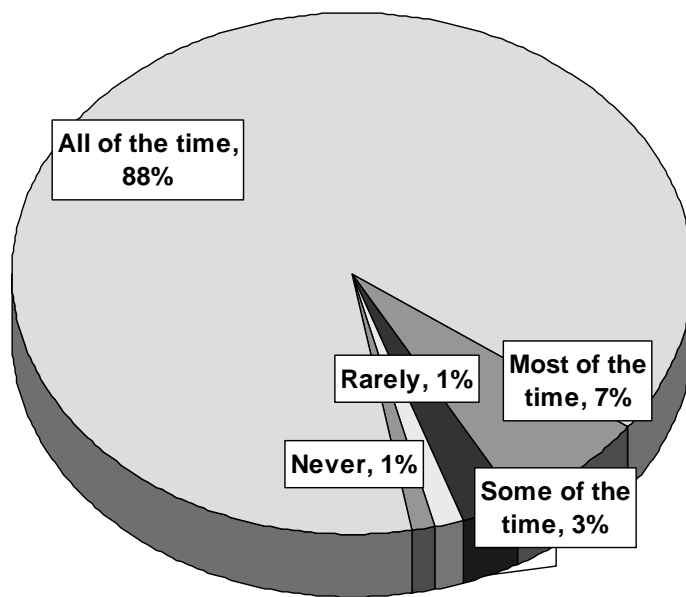
Unweighted N=439

Reason	Percent
Already fits/fits as is/it's fine where it is now.	75%
It was adjusted for me/they adjusted it to fit me.	1%
It's comfortable enough/comfortable as is.	16%
Never thought about it.	2%
Automatic/Self-adjusting	3%
Other miscellaneous responses.	5%
Not sure.	*

Drivers' Use Of Seat Belts

The vast majority of drivers (88%) reported using their seat belt “all of the time” while driving. Most of the remaining drivers (7%) said they used their seat belt “most of the time.” Few drivers reported that they rarely (1%) or never (1%) wore their seat belt.²

Figure 6
Reported Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

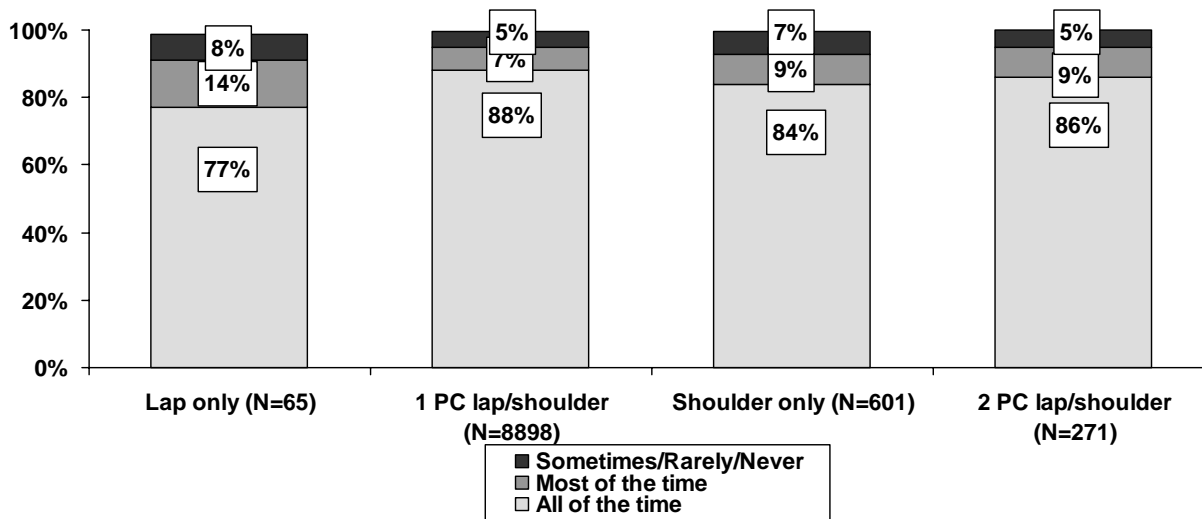
Unweighted 10638

² Frequency of seat belt use was determined by combining the two questions which asked how often drivers wore their lap belt and their shoulder belt. Values were assigned by taking the highest response for either question. For example, if a respondent stated that s/he wore a shoulder belt “all of the time” but a lap belt “most of the time”, the respondent was assigned to the category “all of the time”.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers were most likely to wear seat belts all of the time if the belts had both a lap and shoulder strap, either attached as a one-piece system (88%) or separated into a two-piece system (86%). Shoulder only systems corresponded with somewhat lower usage (84%), while lowest usage occurred in vehicles with lap only systems (77%).

**Figure 7
Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use:
Belts Not Having Automatic Components**



Qx: Do the seat belts in the front seat of the (car/truck/van) go across your shoulder only, across your lap only, or across both your shoulder and lap?

Qx: Are the shoulder and lap belts one piece or are they two separate belts?

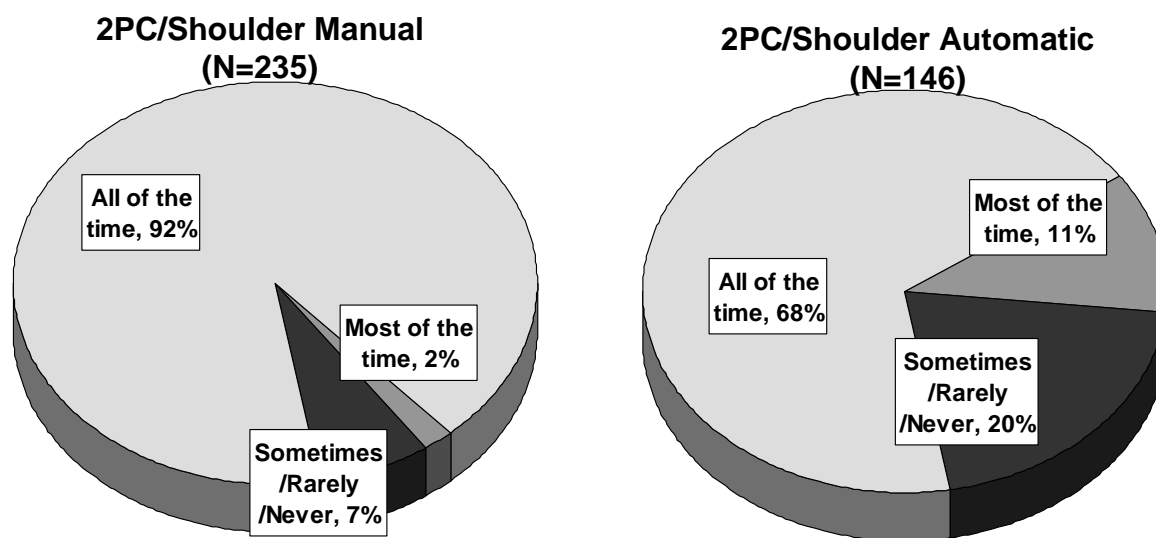
Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Base: Drivers whose seat belts have no automatic component.

Unweighted N's listed above.

A key question about two-piece belt systems is whether persons who wear their shoulder belt also put on their lap belt (lap and shoulder belts used together are the most effective form of restraint for preventing injuries and fatalities). Figure 8 shows that if the shoulder belt was manual and used all of the time, 92% of drivers said that they also wore their lap belt all of the time. But if the shoulder belt was automatic and used all of the time, then 68% said they wore their lap belt all of the time [this analysis excluded systems reported to have both an automatic lap belt and an automatic shoulder belt because they were considered to be errors in belt identification by respondents].

**Figure 8
Frequency Of Driver Lap Belt Use:
Shoulder Belt Used All The Time**



Qx: Are the shoulder and lap belt one piece or are they two separate belts?

Qx: Are both the shoulder and lap belt automatic, is only the shoulder belt automatic or is neither the shoulder or lap belt automatic?

Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?

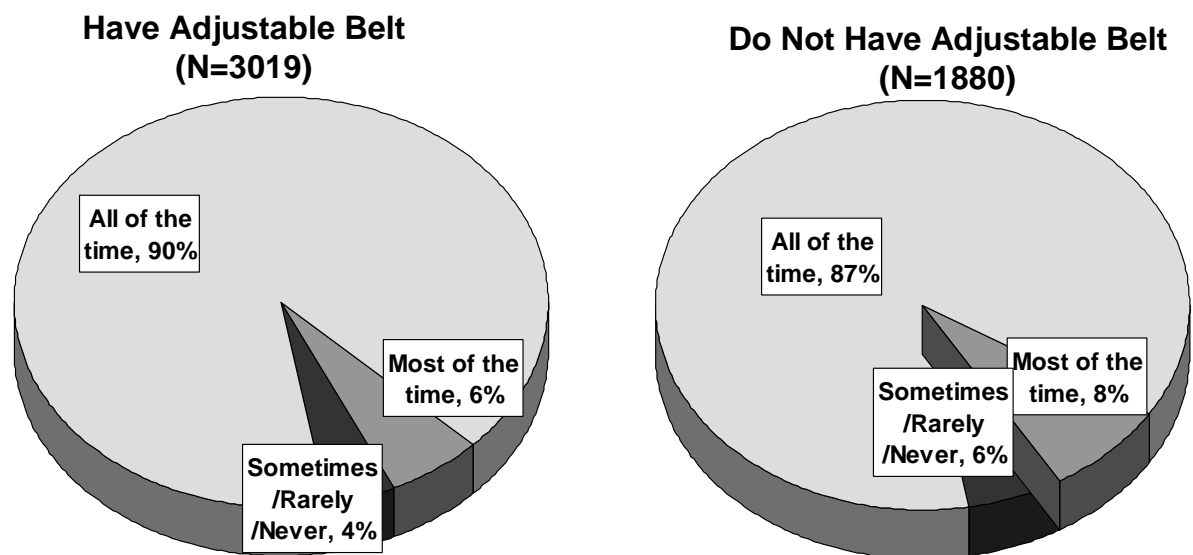
Base: Drivers with two-piece belt systems (lap belt is manual) who always use their shoulder belt.

Unweighted N's listed above.

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Since drivers who use the adjustable feature on shoulder belts are usually able to make themselves more comfortable (see page 8), analyses were conducted to assess whether the presence of an adjustable shoulder belt corresponded with higher belt usage. Figure 9 shows the results. Ninety percent of drivers who had adjustable shoulder belts reported using their shoulder belt “all of the time” compared to 87% of drivers who did not have shoulder belts with the adjustable feature.

Figure 9
Frequency Of Driver Shoulder Belt Use: Adjustable
Versus Non-Adjustable Shoulder Belts



Qx: *Shoulder belts are usually attached to the door or frame behind the driver’s left shoulder. In some vehicles, this attachment can be moved up or down to adjust the shoulder belt. Is this attachment adjustable in your vehicle?*

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has shoulder belts.*

Unweighted N’s listed above.

**The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.*

Group Differences In Reported Seat Belt Use

Table 5 presents group differences in reported seat belt use by drivers while driving. The “all of the time” response category is the primary index employed by this survey to describe level of seat belt use. It therefore provides a good point of reference for readers to focus on while reviewing the Table.

One of the largest differentiating factors in belt use was the gender of the driver. Females (92%) were significantly more likely to report “all of the time” use than males (85%). Another differentiating factor was the type of primary vehicle driven, with pickup truck drivers (79%) less likely to report “all of the time” use than drivers of cars (91%), vans/minivans (89%), or SUVs (88%). In addition, drivers in rural areas (78%) were less likely than those in urban (90%) or suburban areas (89%) to report “all of the time” use.

Younger drivers were less likely than older drivers to wear seat belts. The percentage of drivers ages 16-20 (82%) and 21-24 (80%) who reported “all of the time” seat belt use was lower than the percentage for the overall population (88%).

Blacks (84%) were similar to Whites (87%) in reported “all of the time” use.³ The figure for Hispanics (93%) was somewhat higher than that for non-Hispanics (87%). It bears noting that a large proportion of Hispanics in the study sample resided in States whose seat belt laws contained provisions permitting primary (as opposed to secondary) enforcement of seat belt violations.⁴

³ See operational definition on page xx

⁴ See page 127 for more information on primary and secondary enforcement

Table 5
Driver Seat Belt Use By Demographic
And Other Characteristics

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.*

	Unweighted N	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
Total	(10638)	88%	7%	3%	1%	1%
Gender						
Male	(5006)	85%	8%	3%	2%	2%
Female	(5632)	92%	5%	2%	1%	1%
Age						
16-20	(547)	82%	11%	3%	1%	3%
21-24	(379)	80%	12%	5%	3%	1%
25-34	(1878)	86%	8%	3%	1%	2%
35-44	(2374)	88%	7%	2%	2%	1%
45-54	(2069)	89%	6%	3%	1%	1%
55-64	(1540)	89%	7%	3%	1%	1%
65+	(1658)	92%	5%	1%	1%	*
Race						
Black	(919)	84%	8%	5%	2%	1%
White	(8226)	87%	7%	3%	1%	1%
Asian	(216)	95%	3%	1%	1%	*
Native American/ Alaskan Native	(183)	88%	5%	4%	1%	2%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	(40)	83%	16%	--	*	--
Multi-race	(185)	89%	7%	1%	2%	*
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	(954)	93%	5%	1%	1%	*
Non-Hispanic	(9557)	87%	7%	3%	1%	1%
Education						
11 or less	(921)	87%	8%	3%	1%	2%
HS grad/GED	(2901)	84%	9%	3%	2%	2%
Some college	(2587)	88%	7%	3%	1%	1%
College grad	(4119)	91%	6%	2%	1%	*

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases.

Table 5 (Continued)
Driver Seat Belt Use By Demographic
And Other Characteristics

	Unweighted N	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
Income						
<\$15,000	(754)	84%	8%	3%	2%	3%
\$15,000-29,999	(1318)	88%	7%	3%	2%	1%
\$30,000-49,999	(2007)	87%	7%	3%	1%	1%
\$50,000-74,999	(1959)	87%	7%	3%	2%	1%
\$75,000-99,999	(1328)	87%	7%	3%	2%	1%
>\$100,000	(1805)	90%	6%	2%	1%	1%
Child under age 16 in household	(3905)	87%	8%	2%	2%	2%
No child under 16 in household	(6717)	88%	7%	3%	1%	1%
Urbanicity						
Urban	(3088)	90%	6%	2%	1%	1%
Suburban	(5479)	89%	6%	2%	1%	1%
Rural	(2071)	80%	12%	5%	2%	2%
Vehicle type						
Car	(5820)	91%	6%	2%	1%	1%
Van/Minivan	(973)	89%	7%	2%	1%	2%
Pickup truck	(1736)	79%	10%	5%	3%	3%
SUV	(1973)	88%	8%	3%	1%	1%
Injured in crash						
Yes	(2937)	87%	7%	3%	2%	1%
No	(7667)	88%	7%	3%	1%	1%

Table 5 (Continued)
Driver Seat Belt Use By Demographic
And Other Characteristics

	Unweighted N	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
Weight						
Males						
<163 lbs.	(489)	88%	8%	2%	1%	1%
163-180 lbs.	(535)	87%	8%	4%	1%	1%
181-205 lbs.	(649)	85%	7%	3%	2%	3%
206+ lbs.	(737)	82%	9%	4%	4%	1%
Females						
<126 lbs.	(499)	92%	6%	1%	*	*
126-140 lbs.	(644)	94%	4%	1%	*	1%
141-160 lbs.	(611)	92%	4%	2%	1%	1%
161+ lbs.	(847)	91%	5%	3%	1%	1%
Height						
Males						
<5'9"	(679)	86%	9%	3%	1%	1%
5'9"-5'10"	(629)	86%	7%	4%	1%	2%
5'11"-6'0"	(603)	85%	9%	3%	2%	1%
6'1" +	(490)	84%	8%	2%	4%	2%
Females						
<5'3"	(664)	92%	5%	1%	*	1%
5'3"-5'4"	(705)	93%	5%	1%	*	*
5'5"-5'6"	(706)	91%	5%	1%	1%	1%
5'7" +	(622)	91%	4%	3%	1%	1%

Relating Seat Belt Use To Other (Problem) Behaviors

Past research has suggested that persons who do not wear their seat belt are more likely to engage in other unsafe or unhealthy behaviors. The Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey asked questions about alcohol use and driving speed. Tables 6 and 7 show drivers' reported belt use according to how persons answered these questions.

Whether or not persons had consumed alcohol in the recent past did not make much difference in reported seat belt use. Rather, what seemed to matter was the manner in how people drank. Those drivers who typically consumed 1 drink when drinking reported the highest belt use among drinkers: 92% said they wore their seat belt all of the time. The percentage who said "all of the time" declined to 87% for those who averaged 2-3 drinks, 79% for those who averaged 4-6 drinks, and 65% for those who averaged more than 6 drinks. Among those persons who stated that they had driven a vehicle after drinking alcohol within the past 30 days, 82% claimed they wore their seat belt all of the time while driving. If they acknowledged driving when they thought they had consumed too much alcohol to drive safely, all of the time use fell to 58% (although the number of persons who reported that they drove after drinking too much was small).

Reported seat belt use was lower among persons who tended to drive faster than others. The survey asked drivers which statement best described their highway driving: "I tend to pass other cars more often than other cars pass me" or "Other cars tend to pass me more often." Those who tended to pass others were less likely to report wearing their seat belt all of the time (83% compared to 91% of those who tended to be passed). The survey also asked how fast the respondents generally drove on highways. Those who tended to drive more than 70 miles per hour were less likely to report wearing seat belts compared to drivers who drove 55 or less (85% versus 90%).

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**Table 6
Driver Seat Belt Use By Alcohol Use**

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?*

Qx: *During the past 30 days, have you had at least one drink of any alcoholic beverage, including liquor, beer, wine or wine coolers?*

Qx: *Did you drink any alcoholic beverages at all during the past 12 months?*

Qx: *On the average, how many drinks did you typically have on the days you drank?*

Qx: *During the past 30 days, have you driven a vehicle after you had been drinking alcohol?*

Qx: *In the past 30 days, have you driven a vehicle when you thought you might have consumed too much alcohol to drive safely?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.*

	Unweighted N	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
Alcohol Use						
Within past 30 days	(2742)	88%	7%	2%	2%	1%
In past year, but not in past 30 days	(730)	88%	7%	3%	1%	*
Not in past year	(1785)	90%	5%	2%	1%	2%
Usual number of drinks						
1	(1469)	92%	6%	2%	1%	*
2-3	(1507)	87%	8%	2%	1%	1%
4-6	(316)	79%	8%	6%	4%	3%
7 or more	(85)	65%	19%	4%	7%	5%
Drank and drove in past 30 days	(594)	82%	9%	4%	2%	2%
Drank too much and drove in past 30 days	(40)	58%	13%	--	18%	11%

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**Table 7
Driver Seat Belt Use By Driving Speed**

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?*

Qx: *Which statement best describes your highway driving: I tend to pass other cars more often than other cars pass me, or other cars tend to pass me more often?*

Qx: *In general, how fast do you drive on highways?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.*

	Unweighted N	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
I tend to pass other cars more often	(1603)	83%	10%	4%	1%	2%
Other cars tend to pass me more often	(3156)	91%	5%	2%	1%	1%
Neither, I drive the same as most others	(224)	89%	6%	4%	2%	--
Both, I pass others, and others pass me	(175)	92%	6%	1%	1%	1%
Normal speed on highway						
55 or less	(828)	90%	5%	2%	2%	1%
56-60	(795)	87%	7%	3%	1%	1%
61-70	(2601)	89%	7%	2%	1%	1%
More than 70	(783)	85%	8%	3%	2%	2%

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Clarifying Reported Usage

Questionnaire development during 1994 included cognitive testing. During the testing, subjects were asked how often they wore their seat belt while driving their vehicle. Most said “all of the time.” The interviewers then followed that question with a cognitive probe, asking the subjects when was the last time they did not wear their seat belt while driving. A number of persons who had just previously said that they wore their seat belt “all of the time” while driving responded “yesterday” or even that very morning.

It appeared that some subjects chose to interpret the initial usage question in a way that differed from the exact wording of the item, so NHTSA included the cognitive probe in the survey. Six percent of drivers who said that they wore their seat belts “all of the time” immediately acknowledged not using their seat belt while driving in the past day or week. Seventy percent of self-reported “most of the time” users admitted recent non-use, indicating that usage by at least some people in this category may be much more sporadic than the label would suggest. In general, the data implied a significant difference in usage between the “all of the time” and “most of the time” categories.

Table 8
Last Time Drivers Did Not Wear Seat Belt
By Frequency Of Reported Seat Belt Use

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?*

Qx: *When was the last time you did not wear your seat belt (neither lap nor shoulder) while driving?*

Qx: *Has there been any occasion in the past 12 months when you did not wear your seat belt (neither lap nor shoulder) when driving?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear seat belts.*

Last time seat belt not worn	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely
	(N=9410)	(N=718)	(N=250)	(N=134)
Today	2%	30%	74%	69%
Past week	4%	39%	20%	23%
Past month	4%	13%	3%	4%
Within past year	3%	6%	1%	--
Not sure/Refused	1%	5%	1%	--
Year or more ago/Always wear	85%	7%	1%	4%

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Revised Seat Belt Use

Table 9 shows what happens when “all of the time” users who conceded to not wearing their seat belt in the past day or week while driving were subtracted from the “all of the time” category. The percentage of “all of the time” belt users declined 6 percentage points, from 88% to 82%.

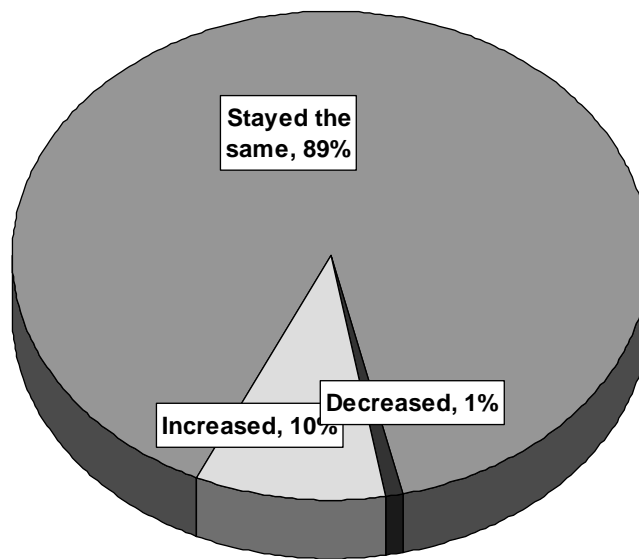
Table 9
Revised Seat Belt Use By Drivers

	All of the time (Excludes past day or week non- users)	All of the time But Past day or week non-use	Most of the time	Some of the time/Rarely/ Never
Total drivers	82%	6%	7%	5%
Male	78%	6%	8%	7%
Female	87%	5%	5%	3%
Black	77%	8%	8%	7%
White	82%	5%	7%	5%
Age 16-24	72%	9%	11%	7%
Age 25-69	83%	5%	6%	5%
Age 70+	87%	5%	6%	2%
Passenger cars	85%	6%	6%	4%
Pickup trucks	73%	7%	10%	10%
Urban	85%	5%	6%	4%
Suburban	84%	5%	6%	5%
Rural	72%	7%	12%	9%

Reported Changes In Belt Use

Besides questioning drivers about their current seat belt usage, the survey asked respondents whether their use of seat belts when driving had changed in the past 12 months. Most (89%) said that their usage had stayed the same. Ten percent answered that it had increased, while 1% reported a decrease.

Figure 10
Reported Change In The Use Of Seat Belts By Drivers



Qx: *In the past 12 months, has your use of seat belts when driving (car driven most often) increased, decreased, or stayed the same?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.*

Unweighted N=5289

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Regional Differences

NHTSA segments the country into ten regions for programmatic outreach. Table 10 shows both change in belt use and frequency of belt use reported across the ten regions. No more than 2% of drivers in any region reported that their use of seat belts in the past year when driving had decreased. The percentage of drivers who said that their usage had increased ranged from 7% in NHTSA Regions IX and X to 12% in NHTSA Region VII. In some regions, small 12-month increases may reflect higher pre-existing usage rates that limited the amount of potential gain. For example, Region IX recorded the highest overall usage rate (94% said they wore their seat belts all of the time) and lowest increase (7%). Readers are cautioned that some of the regional percentages are based on small numbers. In particular, Regions I (n=266), VII (n=268), VIII (n=182), and X (n=237) all included fewer than 300 cases in computing the percentage increase/decrease.

Table 10
Patterns Of Reported Driver Seat Belt Use
By NHTSA Region

Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (lap/shoulder) belt?

Qx: In the past 12 months, has your use of seat belts when driving (car driven most often) increased, decreased or stayed the same?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Note: The Table below shows the States that each NHTSA region supported at the time of the survey. Effective 10/01/07, NHTSA changed the States that each NHTSA region is responsible for supporting.

NHTSA regions	States	Change in seat belt use within past year (N=5289)		Percent of drivers reporting using seat belt "All of the time" (N=10638)
		Increased	Decreased	
I	CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT	10%	2%	81%
II	NJ, NY	11%	1%	90%
III	DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV	11%	*	87%
IV	AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN	10%	1%	86%
V	IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI	11%	1%	86%
VI	AR, LA, NM, OK, TX	9%	1%	89%
VII	IA, KS, MO, NE	12%	1%	83%
VIII	CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY	10%	--	86%
IX	AZ, CA, HI, NV	7%	*	94%
X	AK, ID, OR, WA	7%	*	91%
	Total	10%	1%	88%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No Cases

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Demographic Differences

Persons who were younger (18% for 16-24 year-olds), were not high school graduates (14%), or were Black (14%) were more likely to report that their use of seat belts as drivers had increased in the past 12 months.

Table 11
Reported Change In Driver's Use Of Seat Belts In The Past Year By Demographic Characteristics

Qx: In the past 12 months, has your use of seat belts when driving (car driven most often) increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

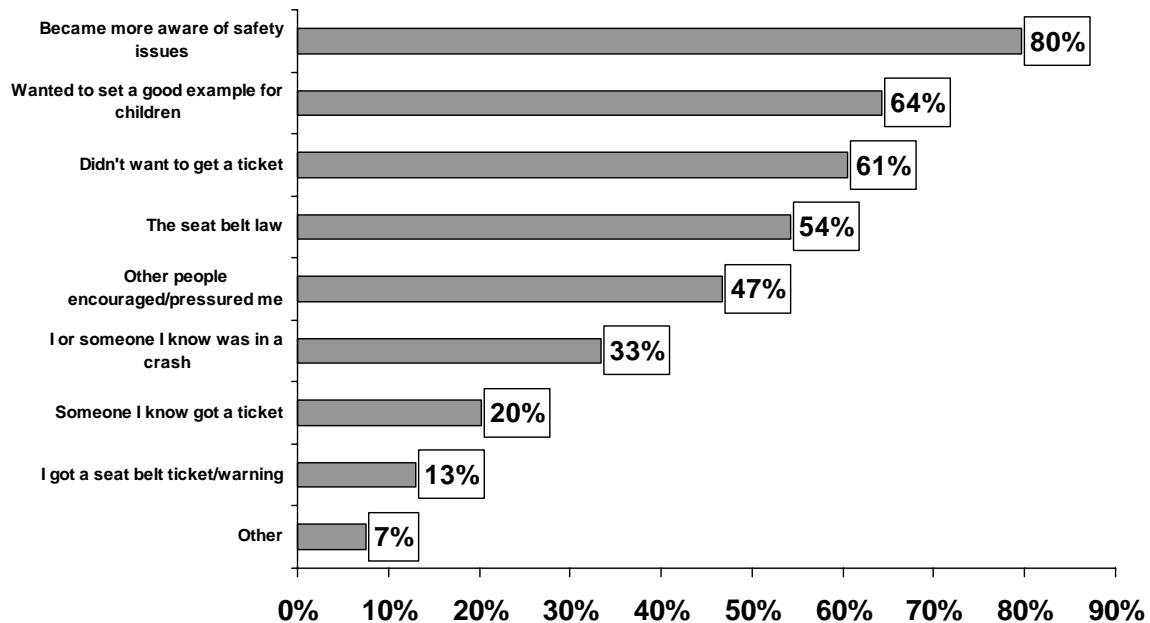
	Unweighted N	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Age				
16-20	(278)	18%	3%	79%
21-24	(196)	18%	1%	80%
25-34	(960)	10%	1%	89%
35-44	(1187)	9%	*	91%
45-54	(985)	9%	*	91%
55-64	(759)	9%	*	90%
65+	(828)	7%	*	91%
Gender				
Male	(2484)	11%	1%	88%
Female	(2805)	9%	1%	90%
Race				
Black	(476)	14%	1%	84%
White	(4058)	9%	1%	90%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	(500)	12%	1%	86%
Non-Hispanic	(4727)	9%	1%	89%
Education				
11 or less	(454)	14%	1%	83%
HS grad/GED	(1442)	13%	1%	86%
Some college	(1306)	10%	1%	89%
College grad	(2030)	6%	*	94%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases.

Reasons For Change

Drivers who said that their use of seat belts had increased over the past 12 months were asked what caused the change. The interviewers read seven potential reasons to the respondents, who then indicated for each whether it was a cause of their increased seat belt use. The interviewers also gave the respondents the opportunity to volunteer other reasons. Most often, the drivers ascribed their increased use of seat belts to a greater awareness of safety (80%) and wanting to set a good example for children (64%). Avoidance of a ticket (61%), belt laws (54%), and pressure from others (47%) also emerged as significant reasons.

**Figure 11
Causes Of Increased Seat Belt Use**



Qx: What caused the change? Was it because... ?

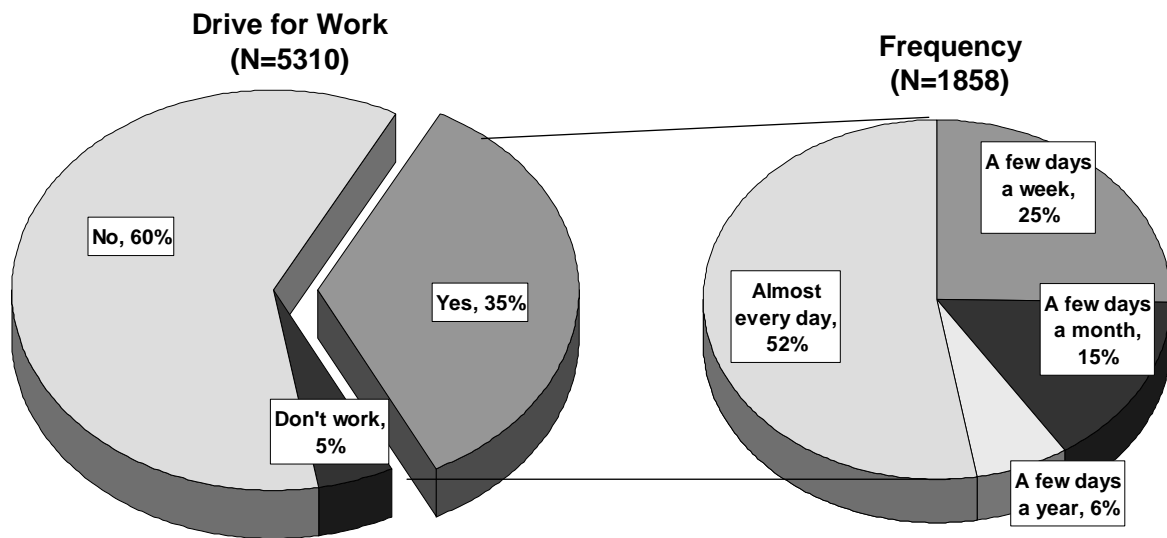
Base: Drivers who reported an increase in seat belt use over the past 12 months.

Unweighted N=493

Company Seat Belt Policy

Thirty-five percent of drivers at least sometimes drove a vehicle as part of a job or business (not including driving to and from work). This was more prevalent among males (44%) than females (25%). If someone drove on the job, it usually occurred at least several days a week. More than one-half (52%) of those who drove on the job said they did so almost every day, another 25% said they did so a few days a week.

**Figure 12
Frequency Drive Vehicle As
Part Of Job Or Business**



Qx: Not including driving to and from work, do you at least sometimes drive a vehicle as part of a job or business?

Qx: How often do you drive a vehicle as part of a job or business? Almost every day, a few days a week, a few days a month, or a few days a year?

Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

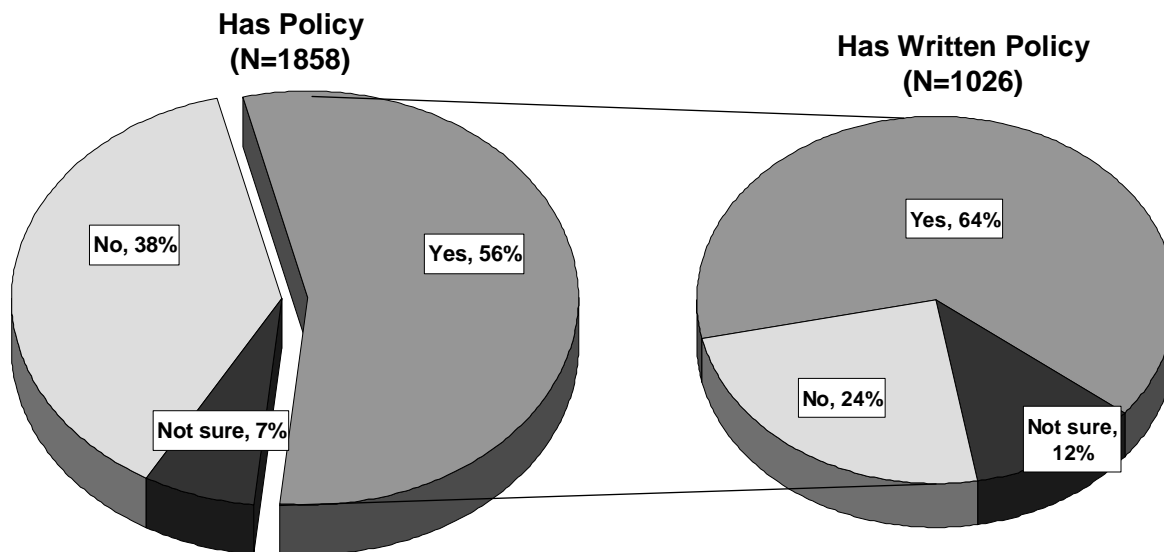
Unweighted N's listed above.

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

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More than one-half of drivers (56%) who drove on the job believed their company had a policy requiring seat belt use when driving on the job. Thirty-eight percent said there was no policy and 7% were unsure. Among those who thought their company had a policy, 64% claimed it was a written policy. About one-quarter (24%) did not believe the policy was written, and 12% were unsure. In total, 35% of those who drove as part of a job or business reported that their company had a written policy requiring the use of seat belts when driving on the job.

Figure 13
Presence Of Company Seat Belt Policy



Qx: Does your company or business have a policy requiring seat belt use when driving on the job?

Qx: Is that a written policy?

Base: Drivers who drive on the job.

Unweighted N's listed above.

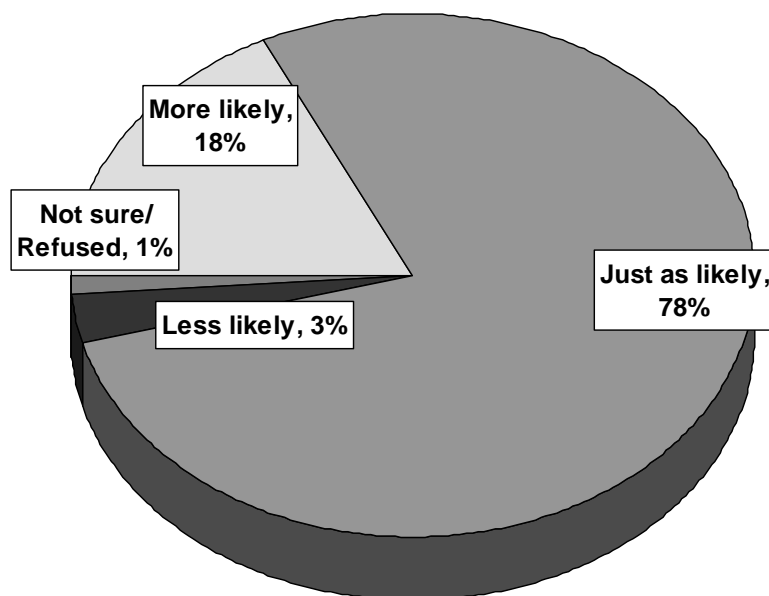
*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Seat Belt Use At Work And Company Policy

Those persons who drove as part of their job were asked if there was any difference in their seat belt use between their work and personal driving. Persons who had indicated that they never wore their belt when driving were not asked the question.

A majority of drivers (78%) said that there was no difference in their seat belt use when driving on the job as compared to when driving for personal use. However, 18% claimed they were more likely to wear their seat belts on the job, whereas 3% reported that they were less likely to wear them at work.

Figure 14
Likelihood Of Wearing Seat Belt:
Work Compared To Personal Driving



Qx: Are you more likely, less likely or just as likely to wear your seat belt when driving on the job as compared to when driving for personal use?

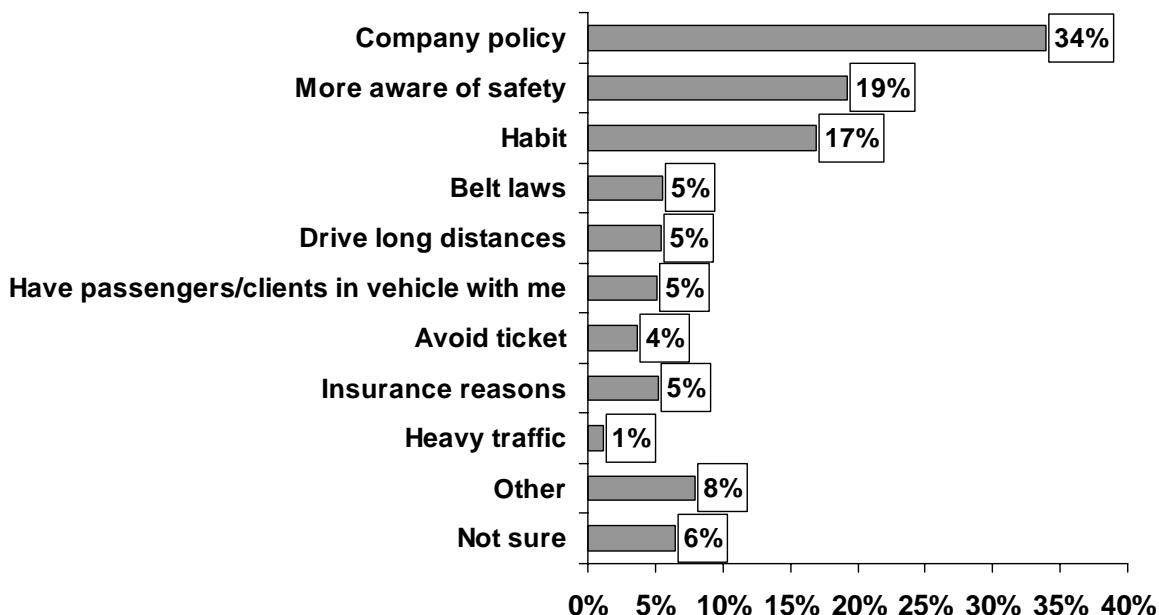
Base: Drives a vehicle as part of job and at least on occasion wears a seat belt.

Unweighted N=1829

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Of those more likely to wear their seat belt when driving on the job, the most frequent reason was because of company policy (34%), followed by an increased awareness of safety (19%). Among the few drivers who said they wore their seat belt less frequently when driving on the job, the single most common reason was that they were in and out of the vehicle all of the time (42%).

Figure 15
Causes Of Increased Belt Use
When Driving On The Job



Qx: Why are you more likely to wear your belt when driving on the job?

Base: More likely to wear seat belt when driving on the job as compared to personal driving.

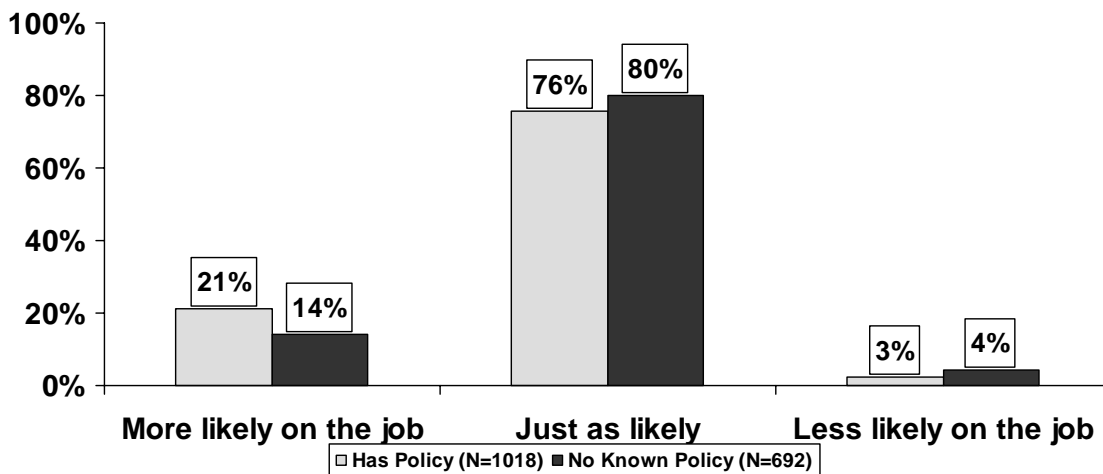
Unweighted N=312

Categories sum to more than 100% because more than one response was allowed.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

A key question is whether or not the presence of a company seat belt policy affects employees' seat belt use. The item asking respondents to compare their seat belt use when driving for work to their usage during personal driving provides one means for exploring this issue. Figure 16 compares the responses to this question from drivers who thought their company had a seat belt policy to those who did not think there was a company policy. It shows that drivers were more likely to report higher seat belt use on the job if they believed their company had a seat belt policy (21% to 14%).

Figure 16
Drivers' Job Versus Personal Seat Belt Use
By Presence Of Company Policy



Qx: Does your company or business have a policy requiring seat belt use when driving on the job?

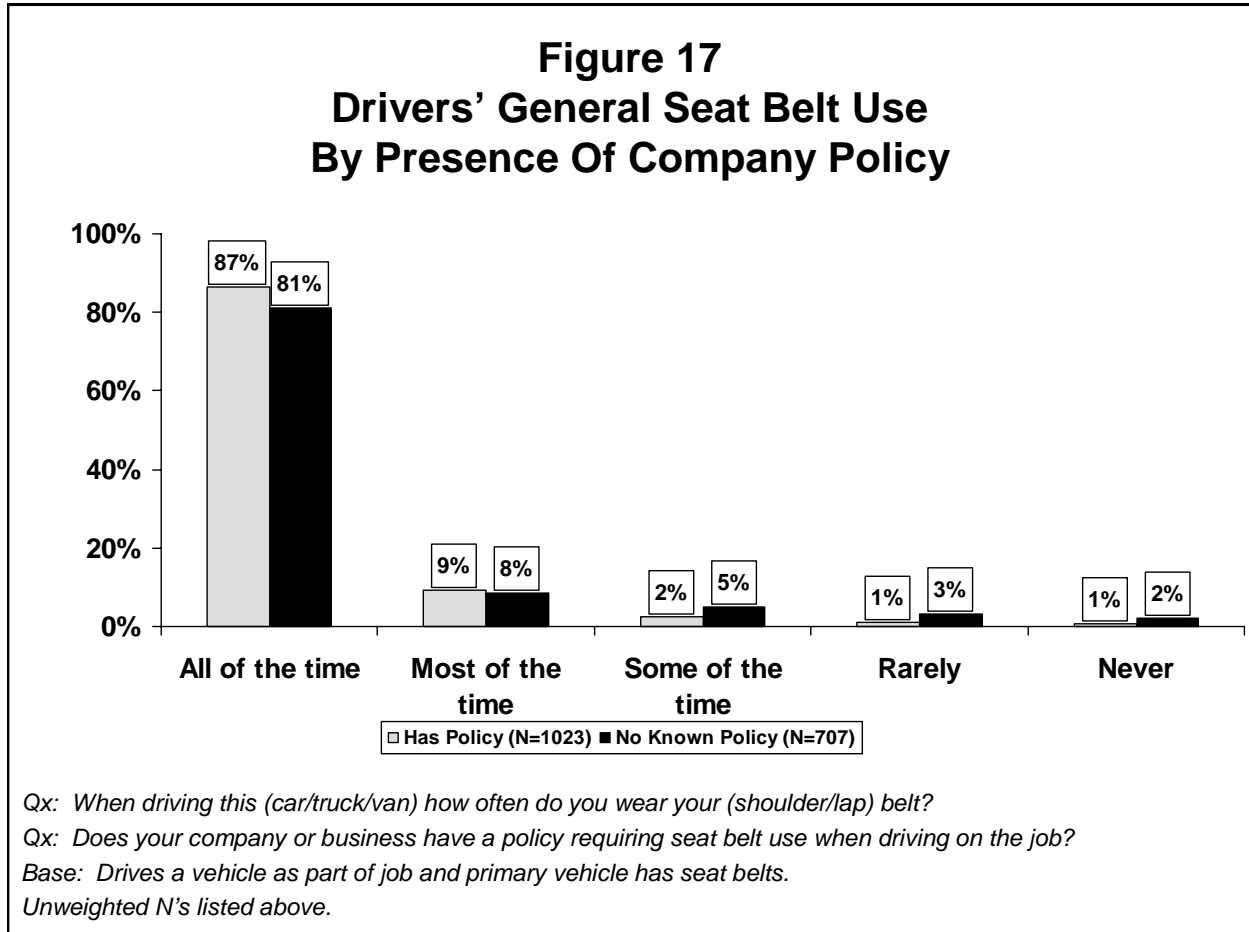
Qx: Are you more likely, less likely or just as likely to wear your seat belt when driving on the job as compared to when driving for personal use?

Base: Drives a vehicle as part of job, at least occasionally wears seat belt, and primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

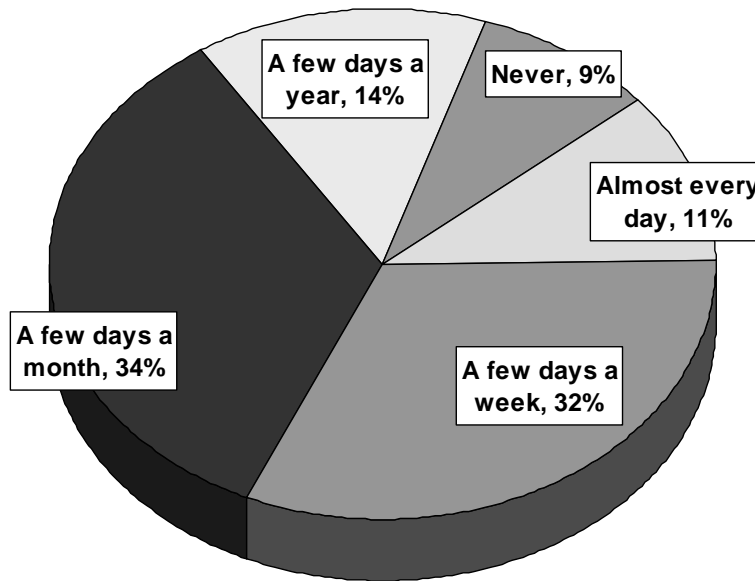
Figure 17 assessed whether company policies were associated with reported differences in seat belt usage between work and personal driving. However, it did not address the question of whether the presence of a company seat belt policy affected usage during both types of driving. Figure 17 looks at general reported seat belt usage (i.e., not associated with a particular type of driving) for persons who drove on the job and did, or did not, believe that their company had a seat belt policy. This analysis included persons who said they never wore their seat belts while driving. According to the data, 87% of drivers who thought their company had a policy said they wore their seat belts “all of the time” compared to 81% who did not think there was a company policy.



Passenger Use Of Seat Belts

More than 90% of the public ride as passengers in motor vehicles at least on occasion. Eleven percent do so almost every day while larger numbers ride as passengers either a few days a week (32%) or a few days a month (34%).

Figure 18
Frequency Ride As Passenger



Qx: How often do you ride as a passenger in any kind of car, van or truck?

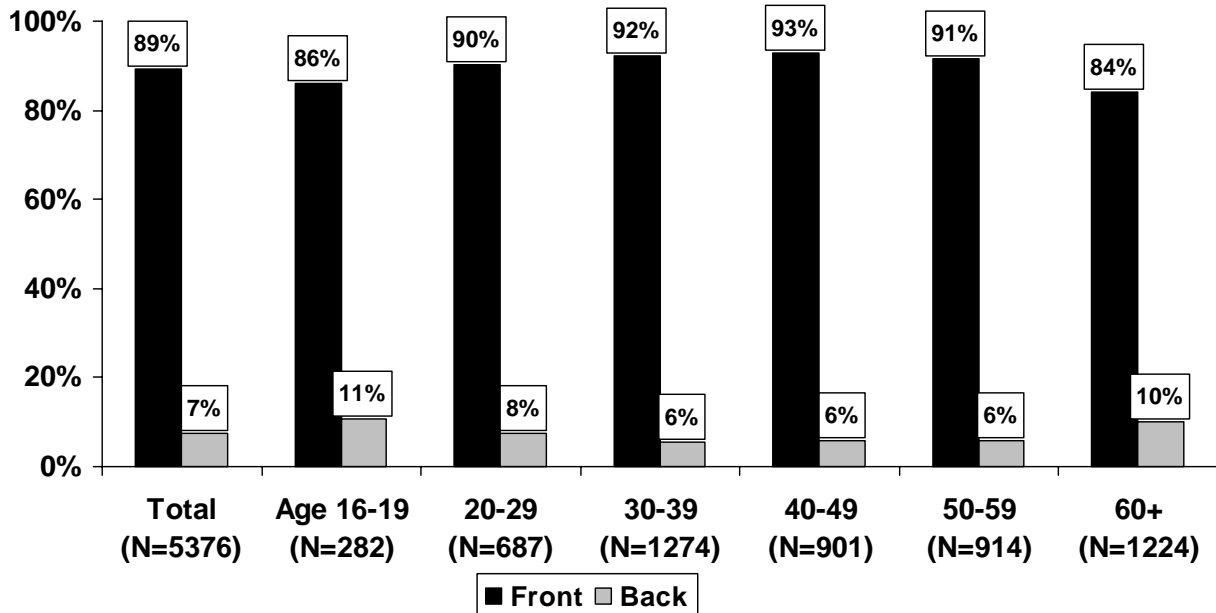
Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The vast majority of persons age 16 and older (89%) usually sit in the front seat when riding as passengers in motor vehicles. Seven percent usually sit in the back and 3% were unsure where they usually sat. Persons age 60 and older were least likely to usually sit in the front.

Figure 19
Usually Rides In Front Or Back Seat



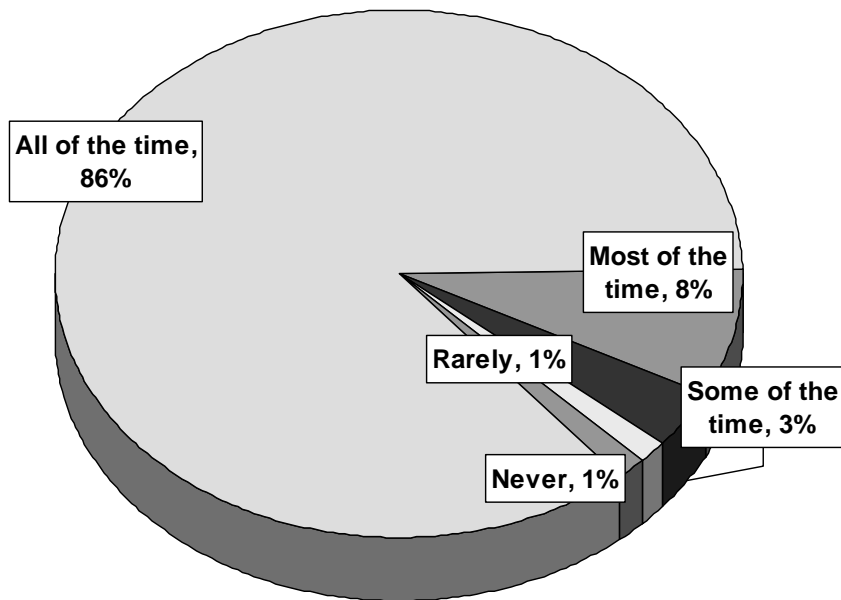
Qx: When you are a passenger, do you usually ride in the front seat or the back seat?

Base: At least sometimes rides as a passenger.

Unweighted N's listed above.

As noted on page 11, 88% of drivers said that they used their seat belt “all of the time” while driving. Reported seat belt usage was about the same on the front seat passenger side at 86%

Figure 20
Reported Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Passenger
In Front Seat



Qx: When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt?

Base: At least sometimes rides as a passenger.

Unweighted N=5376

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Seat belt use may be affected by whether a person is sitting in his/her normal seating position as unusual situations could interfere with established habits. However, for the front seat passenger position, the data showed little difference in reported usage between persons who normally rode in the front as passengers and those who normally rode in the back. Eighty-six percent of persons who normally rode in the front seat as passengers said they always wore their seat belt when riding as front seat passengers. Eighty-five percent of those who normally rode in the back seat said they always wore their seat belt when riding as front seat passengers.

Table 12
Frequency Wear Seat Belt As Front Seat Passenger
By Where Usually Ride As Passenger

Qx: *When you are a passenger, do you usually ride in the front seat or the back seat?*
 Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*
 Base: *At least sometimes rides as a passenger.*

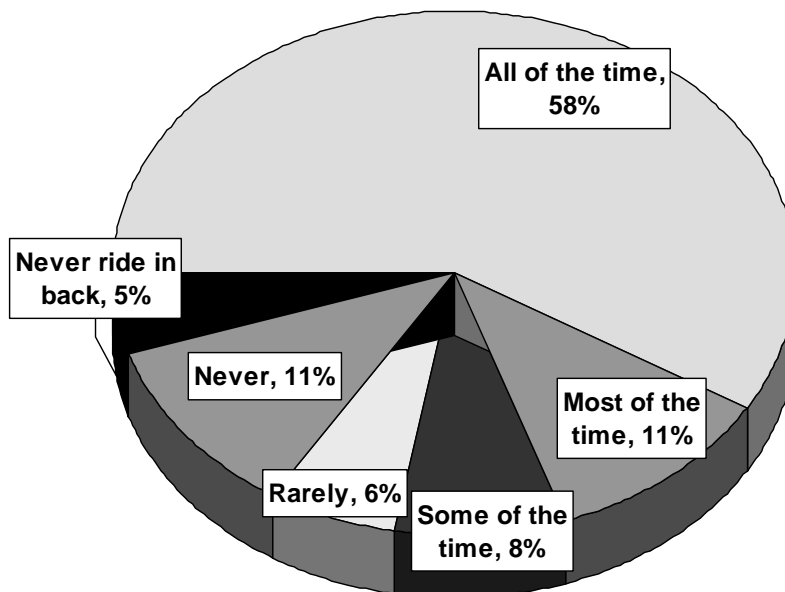
Frequency of front seat passenger seat belt use	Where usually ride as a passenger		
	Front seat	Back seat	Not sure/Refused
	(N=4811)	(N=390)	(N=175)
All of the time	86%	85%	91%
Most of the time	8%	6%	2%
Some of the time	3%	3%	3%
Rarely	1%	1%	*
Never	1%	3%	1%
Never ride in front seat	--	1%	--
Not sure/Refused	*	--	2%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No Cases

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Seat belt use was substantially lower in the back seat passenger positions. Only 58% of persons said that they always wore their seat belt when riding as a passenger in the back seat. One in ten (11%) reported never wearing seat belts in the back seat. It bears repeating, however, that the vast majority of adults usually rode in the front seat (see page 35).

Figure 21
Reported Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Passenger In Back Seat



Qx: When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?

Base: At least sometimes rides as a passenger.

Unweighted N=5376

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Unlike the front seat (page 37), seat belt use in the back did vary slightly according to the person's normal seating position. Fifty-eight percent of those who normally rode in the front seat as passengers said they always wore their seat belt when riding in the back. Sixty-three percent of those who normally rode in the back seat said they always wore their seat belt when riding as back seat passengers.

Table 13
Frequency Wear Seat Belt As Back Seat Passenger
By Where Usually Ride As Passenger

Qx: *When you are a passenger, do you usually ride in the front seat or the back seat?*

Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *At least sometimes rides as a passenger.*

Frequency of back seat passenger seat belt use	Where usually ride as a passenger		
	Front seat	Back seat	Not sure/Refused
	(N=4811)	(N=390)	(N=175)
All of the time	58%	63%	70%
Most of the time	12%	11%	6%
Some of the time	8%	7%	8%
Rarely	6%	8%	8%
Never	11%	11%	6%
Never ride in back seat	6%	--	1%
Not sure/Refused	*	--	1%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No Cases

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

People were fairly consistent in their reported seat belt use as drivers and front seat passengers. More than nine-in-ten (94%) who said they used their seat belt all of the time when driving also said they wore their seat belt all of the time while riding as front seat passengers. Over two-thirds (68%) of those who rarely or never wore their seat belts while driving also rarely or never used them as front seat passengers.

Table 14
Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Driver By
Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Front Seat Passenger

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?*
 Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*
 Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least sometimes ride as passengers.*

Frequency of seat belt use as front seat passenger	Seat belt use as driver			
	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely/Never
	(N=4295)	(N=327)	(N=100)	(N=97)
All of the time	94%	35%	17%	7%
Most of the time	5%	49%	13%	5%
Some of the time	1%	11%	57%	20%
Rarely/Never	1%	5%	13%	68%
Never ride in front	*	--	*	--
Not sure/Refused	*	--	--	--

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Even those who normally wore their seat belts in the front seat were less inclined to wear their seat belts in the back. Only 66% of persons who said they always wore seat belts while driving also said they always wore them as back seat passengers. About one-third of persons who wore seat belts “most of the time” as drivers either always (12%) or most of the time (21%) wore them when riding in the back.

Table 15
Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Driver By
Frequency Of Seat Belt Use As Back Seat Passenger

Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?*

Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least sometimes ride as passengers.*

Frequency of seat belt use as back seat passenger	Seat belt use as driver			
	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely/Never
	(N=4295)	(N=327)	(N=100)	(N=97)
All of the time	66%	12%	7%	4%
Most of the time	11%	21%	6%	2%
Some of the time	7%	19%	13%	6%
Rarely/Never	11%	37%	66%	86%
Never ride in back	5%	9%	8%	1%
Not sure/ Refused	*	*	--	--

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases.

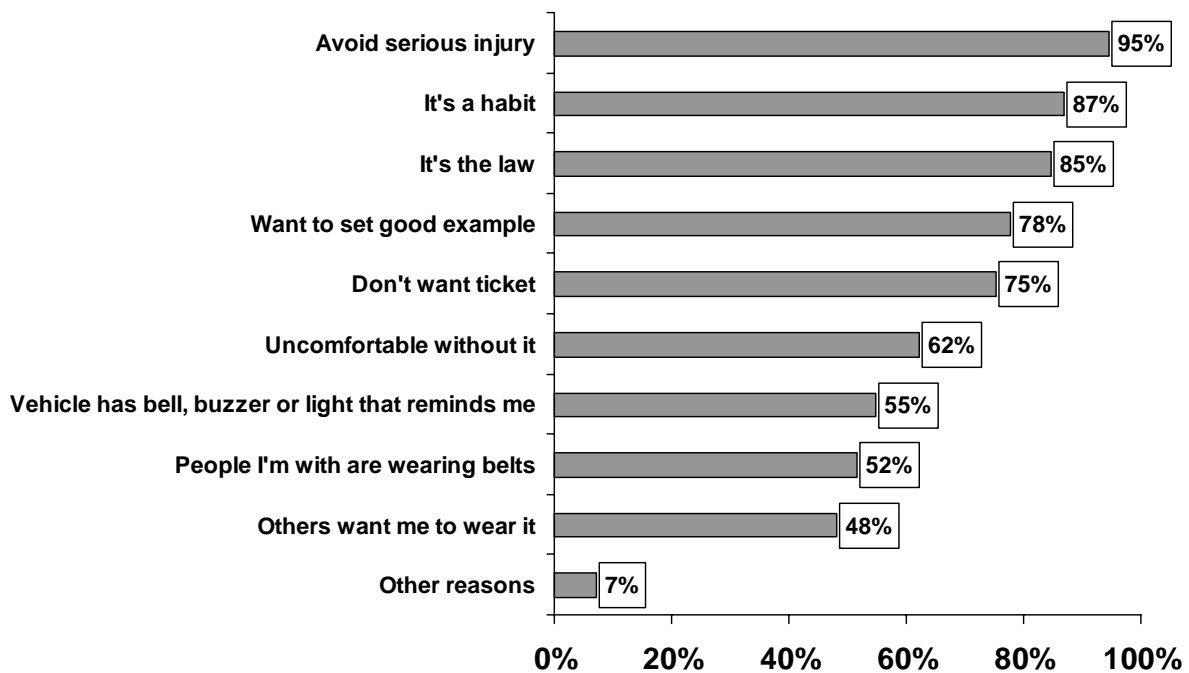
2007 SURVEY RESULTS

**CHAPTER 2: REASONS FOR SEAT BELT USE
AND NON-USE**

Reasons For Seat Belt Use

Drivers who wore shoulder or lap belts at least on occasion were asked their reasons for wearing seat belts when they drove. Nine potential reasons for seat belt use were read to respondents. They were asked whether each reason was a factor in their use of seat belts. The respondents were then given an opportunity to volunteer other reasons for their seat belt use. Almost all drivers (95%) said that avoiding serious injury was a reason they wore their seat belts. **Injury avoidance ranked first regardless of the group to which persons belonged** (see following pages). The drivers also frequently attributed seat belt use to habit (87%), the law (85%), wanting to set a good example for others (78%), and not wanting a ticket (75%).

Figure 22
Reasons For Seat Belt Use - Drivers



Qx: When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...

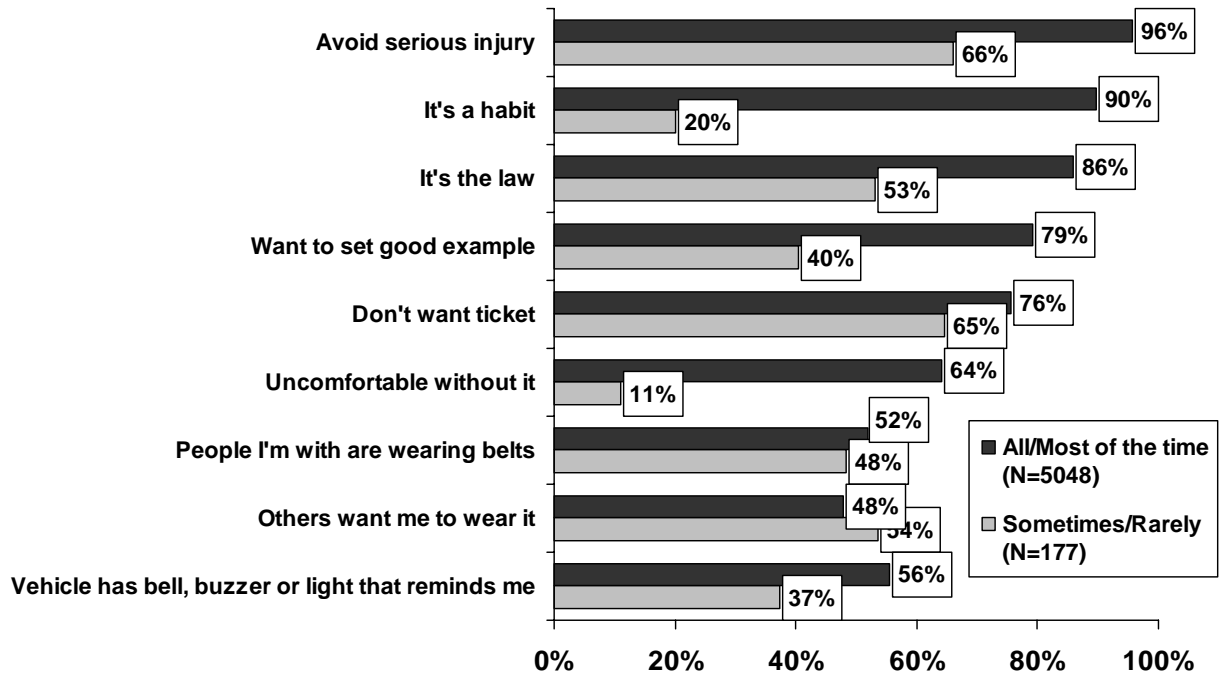
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Unweighted N=5225

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

While almost all drivers (96%) who said they wore their seat belts “all” or “most” of the time gave injury avoidance as a reason for use, only 66% of those who “sometimes” or “rarely” wore seat belts did the same. Frequent users also were more likely than infrequent users to mention the law, setting a good example, and characteristics of regular use (habit; uncomfortable without it).

**Figure 23
Driver Reasons For Seat Belt Use
By Reported Level Of Seat Belt Use**



Qx: When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Females, on average, gave more reasons for their seat belt use, as evidenced by the generally higher percentages. They were particularly more likely than males to report wearing their seat belt because they were uncomfortable without it (67% to 57%), wanted to set a good example for others (82% to 74%), and it was the law (88% to 81%).

Drivers ages 16 through 20 showed more concern about getting a ticket (89%) than did drivers ages 21 to 64 (75%) or 65 and older (68%). Younger drivers were more likely than the older age groups to say they wore their seat belt because others wanted them to wear it (59% versus 48% and 43%).

Table 16
Driver Reasons For Seat Belt Use
By Gender And Age

Qx: When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=2785)	(N=2440)	(N=272)	(N=4038)	(N=821)
Avoid serious injury	96%	93%	94%	95%	95%
It's a habit	89%	85%	84%	87%	88%
It's the law	88%	81%	86%	84%	86%
Want to set good example	82%	74%	79%	78%	76%
Don't want ticket	77%	74%	89%	75%	68%
Uncomfortable without it	67%	57%	56%	63%	62%
People I'm with are wearing belts	52%	51%	52%	52%	53%
Others want me to wear it	47%	49%	59%	48%	43%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	57%	53%	60%	54%	57%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Blacks (80%) and Hispanics (81%) more frequently cited the threat of being ticketed as a reason for seat belt use than did Whites (74%) and non-Hispanics (75%). They were less likely than Whites (50%) and non-Hispanics (49%) to wear seat belts because others wanted them to wear the belts (43% and 38% for Blacks and Hispanics, respectively).

Table 17
Driver Reasons For Seat Belt Use
By Race And Ethnicity

Qx: When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=471)	(N=4005)	(N=496)	(N=4668)
Avoid serious injury	95%	95%	96%	95%
It's a habit	86%	88%	83%	88%
It's the law	87%	84%	89%	84%
Want to set good example	78%	78%	83%	77%
Don't want ticket	80%	74%	81%	75%
Uncomfortable without it	62%	63%	59%	63%
People I'm with are wearing belts	47%	52%	53%	51%
Others want me to wear it	43%	50%	38%	49%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	58%	54%	61%	54%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Persons who had not attended college were more likely than those who had attended to attribute their belt use to the law and their not wanting to be ticketed. Aspects of regular use such as habit and being uncomfortable when not wearing the seat belt were slightly more common reasons among college graduates.

Table 18
Driver Reasons For Seat Belt Use By Education

Qx: *When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...*

Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.*

Reason	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=446)	(N=1413)	(N=1289)	(N=2021)
Avoid serious injury	94%	94%	93%	96%
It's a habit	79%	85%	87%	91%
It's the law	88%	87%	84%	83%
Want to set good example	80%	78%	77%	78%
Don't want ticket	81%	78%	76%	71%
Uncomfortable without it	56%	60%	61%	67%
People I'm with are wearing belts	51%	53%	50%	52%
Others want me to wear it	49%	49%	47%	48%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	57%	55%	53%	55%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers of vans or minivans were more likely than drivers of other vehicles to include wanting to set a good example as a reason for belt use. Pickup truck drivers were less prone than the others to refer to habit or feeling uncomfortable without the belt as reasons for use.

**Table 19
Driver Reasons For Seat Belt Use
By Type Of Primary Vehicle**

Qx: *When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...*

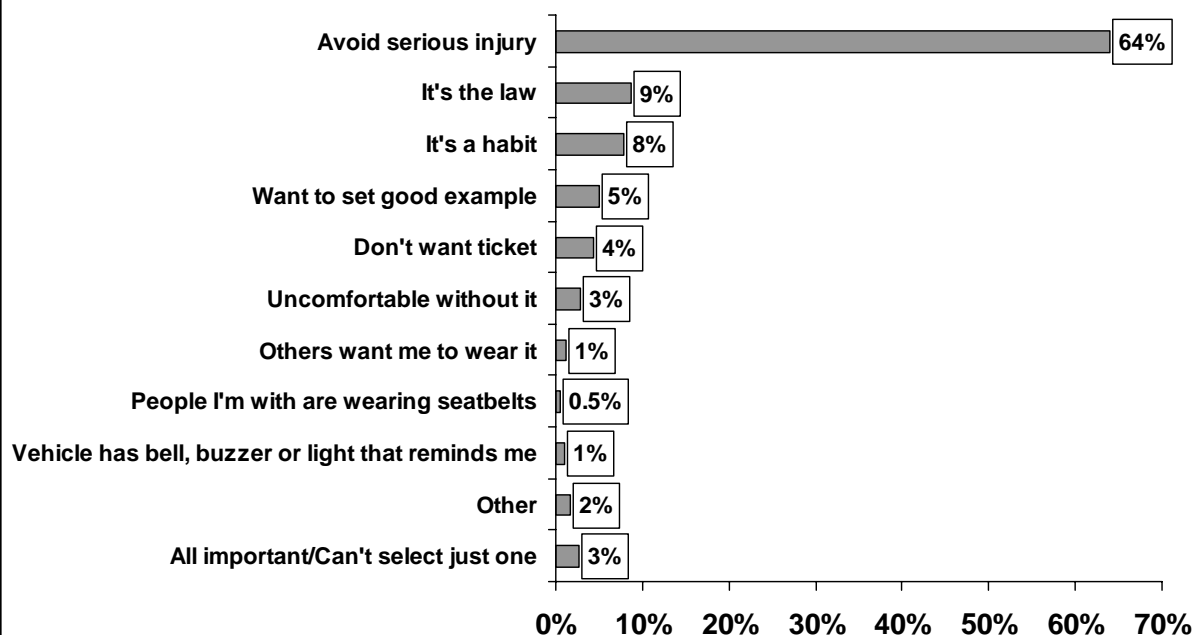
Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.*

Reason	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=2885)	(N=513)	(N=844)	(N=906)
Avoid serious injury	96%	96%	91%	95%
It's a habit	88%	89%	81%	89%
It's the law	86%	84%	82%	83%
Want to set good example	78%	84%	76%	77%
Don't want ticket	76%	70%	75%	75%
Uncomfortable without it	63%	66%	55%	66%
People I'm with are wearing belts	51%	55%	51%	54%
Others want me to wear it	47%	48%	49%	51%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	56%	56%	49%	58%

Most Important Reason For Seat Belt Use

Although a majority of drivers who wore seat belts identified multiple reasons for usage, they tended to give greatest weight to safety considerations. Roughly two-thirds of drivers (64%) said that avoiding serious injury was the most important reason why they wore their seat belt. No other single factor garnered more than 9% of the driver population when drivers were asked which reason was most important.

Figure 24
Most Important Reason For Seat Belt Use - Drivers



Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

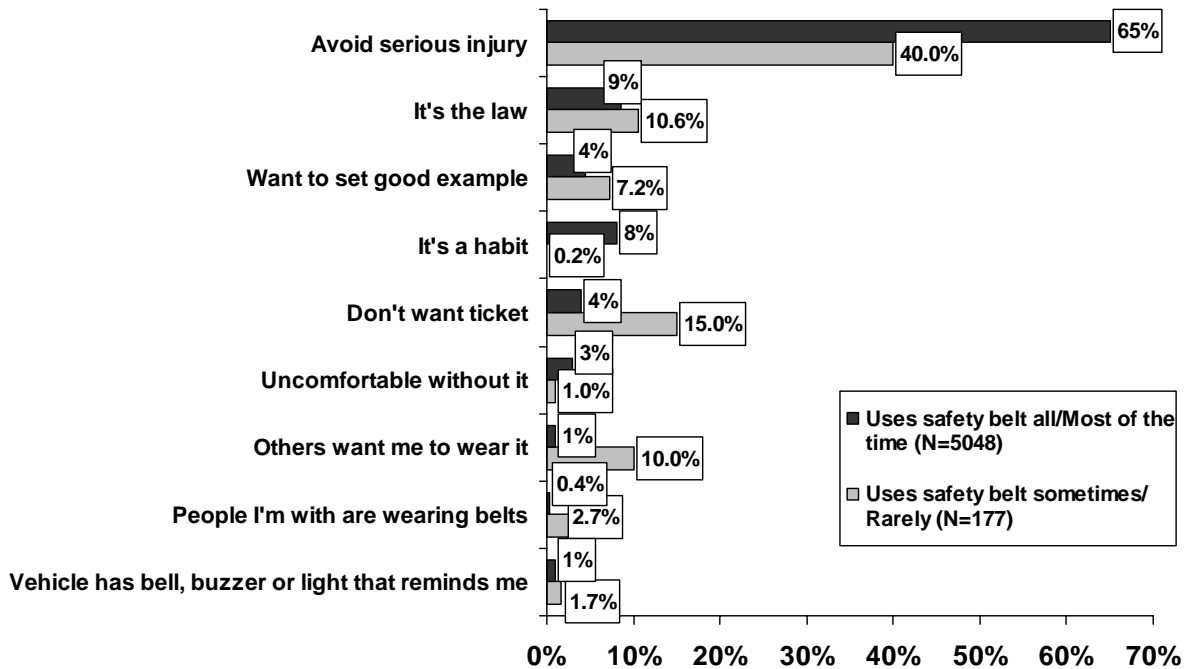
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Unweighted N=5225

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The primary reason drivers gave for wearing their seat belt differed according to the reported level of belt usage. Roughly two-thirds (65%) of drivers who “always” or “most of the time” used their belts said that avoiding injury was their most important reason, compared to less than half of drivers who only “rarely” or “sometimes” wore their belts (40%). Just under one-third of the infrequent users (32%) indicated that not wanting a ticket, wanting to set a good example for others, or pressure from others was their primary reason for use, compared to 9% of those who said they usually wore their seat belt.

Figure 25
Most Important Reason For Driver Seat Belt Use
By Reported Level Of Seat Belt Use



Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?
 Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.
 Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The survey found little difference between males and females in what they considered their most important reason for wearing seat belts. There was also little difference across the general age groups listed in Table 20.

Table 20
Most Important Reason For Driver Seat Belt Use
By Gender And Age

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=2785)	(N=2440)	(N=272)	(N=4038)	(N=821)
Avoid serious injury	65%	62%	62%	65%	60%
It's a habit	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
It's the law	9%	9%	6%	8%	11%
Want to set good example	5%	4%	5%	5%	2%
Don't want ticket	3%	6%	8%	4%	3%
Uncomfortable without it	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%
People I'm with are wearing belts	*	1%	2%	*	*
Others want me to wear it	1%	1%	3%	1%	*
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	2%	*	2%	3%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	3%	2%	2%	2%	7%

*Less than 0.5%.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Blacks were less likely than Whites to report injury avoidance as the major reason for seat belt use. Similarly, Hispanics (59%) were less likely to consider injury avoidance their primary reason for seat belt use compared to non-Hispanics (64%).

Table 21
Most Important Reason For Driver Seat Belt Use
By Race And Ethnicity

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=471)	(N=4005)	(N=496)	(N=4668)
Avoid serious injury	56%	65%	59%	64%
It's a habit	10%	8%	6%	8%
It's the law	13%	8%	11%	8%
Want to set good example	4%	5%	5%	4%
Don't want ticket	7%	4%	6%	4%
Uncomfortable without it	3%	3%	4%	3%
People I'm with are wearing belts	--	1%	--	*
Others want me to wear it	1%	1%	1%	1%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	3%	2%	4%	3%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The more years of formal education that persons had, the more likely they were to attribute their seat belt use primarily to injury avoidance. At the same time, they were less likely than persons with fewer years of schooling to cite the law as their main reason for seat belt usage.

Table 22
Most Important Reason For Driver Seat Belt Use
By Education

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=446)	(N=1413)	(N=1289)	(N=2021)
Avoid serious injury	59%	57%	62%	72%
It's a habit	5%	8%	9%	8%
It's the law	13%	11%	9%	5%
Want to set good example	4%	6%	6%	3%
Don't want ticket	5%	5%	6%	3%
Uncomfortable without it	4%	3%	3%	3%
People I'm with are wearing belts	1%	1%	1%	*
Others want me to wear it	1%	1%	1%	1%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	2%	2%	2%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	5%	5%	2%	1%

*Less than 0.5%.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Pickup truck drivers were slightly less likely than other drivers to attribute their belt use primarily to safety concerns.

Table 23
Most Important Reason For Driver Seat Belt Use
By Primary Vehicle Driven

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

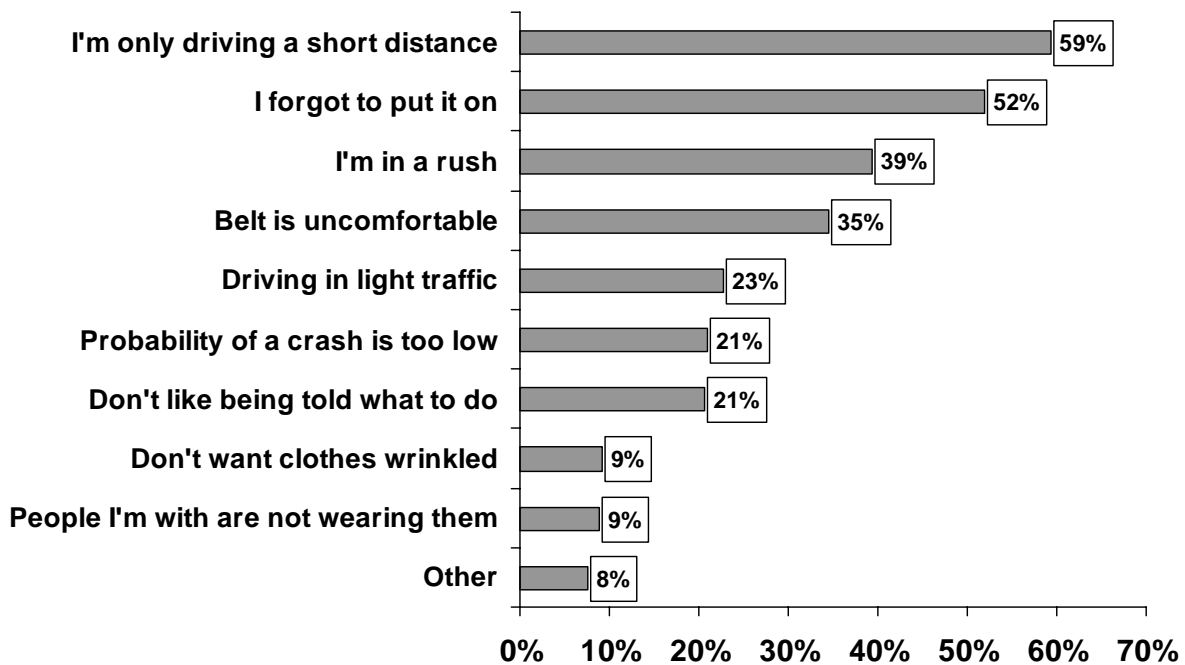
Reason	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=2885)	(N=513)	(N=844)	(N=906)
Avoid serious injury	65%	63%	57%	67%
It's a habit	8%	8%	9%	7%
It's the law	9%	10%	10%	7%
Want to set good example	4%	5%	5%	6%
Don't want ticket	4%	3%	6%	3%
Uncomfortable without it	3%	2%	3%	3%
People I'm with are wearing belts	*	1%	1%	*
Others want me to wear it	1%	1%	2%	1%
Vehicle has bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	3%	2%	2%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	3%	2%	3%	3%

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases.

Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts

Drivers who did not always wear their seat belt during the past year were asked about their reasons for non-use, using methods identical to those described on page 46 (i.e., getting respondents to react to specific reasons, and then giving them the opportunity to add to the list). The most frequent reasons given for non-use by drivers were that they were only going a short distance (59%) or they forgot (52%). Almost two-in-five (39%) said that they were in a rush, while more than one-third (35%) attributed non-use at least in part to discomfort from the seat belt.

Figure 26
Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts - Drivers



Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

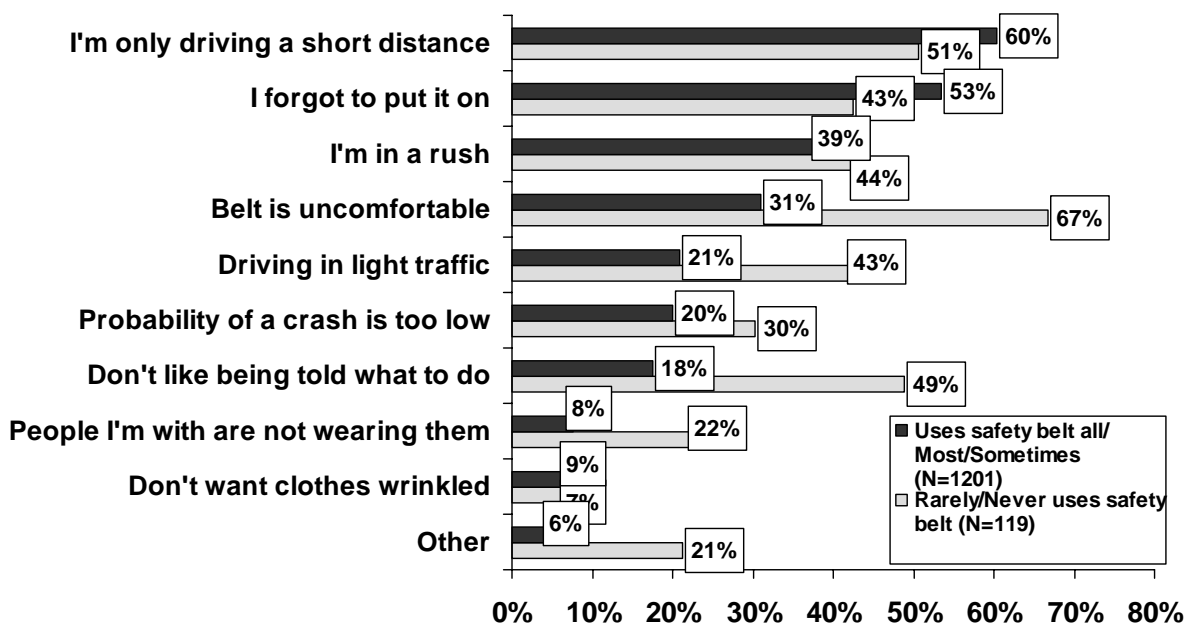
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Unweighted N=1324

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The vast majority of the non-use described on the previous page came from persons who indicated at least occasional use of seat belts. However, Figure 26 also included a small number of persons (119) who said that they rarely or never wore their seat belt while driving. Their reasons for non-use may differ from that of more frequent (i.e., part-time) users. Figure 27 suggests that is the case as it shows that discomfort (67%), resistance to being told what to do (49%), driving in light traffic (43%), and “Other” reasons (21%) were far more prevalent among those who rarely or never wore seat belts.

Figure 27
Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts By Drivers:
Rare/Never Users Versus Part Time Users



Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and at least occasionally do not wear their seat belt.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

There was little difference between males and females in reasons for non-use, with low probability of a crash accounting for the largest gap between the two groups (males 25%; females 15%). With respect to age, the youngest drivers were more likely than older drivers to say they did not wear seat belts because they forgot (68%), were in a rush (44%), the seat belt was uncomfortable (47%), or they were driving in light traffic (30%). However, readers are cautioned that there are fewer than 200 cases in both the age 16-20 and 65+ subgroups that did not wear their seat belts.

Table 24
Driver Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts
By Gender And Age

Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=582)	(N=742)	(N=116)	(N=1039)	(N=154)
I'm only driving a short distance	57%	61%	61%	59%	60%
I forgot to put it on	51%	53%	68%	50%	52%
I'm in a rush	37%	41%	44%	39%	35%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	35%	34%	47%	33%	31%
I'm driving in light traffic	20%	25%	30%	22%	22%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	15%	25%	28%	19%	31%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	9%	9%	6%	10%	6%
People I am with are not wearing belts	8%	10%	16%	8%	5%
Don't like being told what to do	17%	23%	22%	20%	21%
Other	8%	7%	6%	7%	11%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

As with some of the age groups, the number of Blacks and Hispanics in the survey who reported non-use of seat belts was small. Thus, caution should be exercised in interpreting the numbers. Whites were more likely than Blacks to attribute non-use to a dislike for being told what to do. Hispanics were less likely than other groups to say they were only driving a short distance (47%).

**Table 25
Driver Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts
By Race And Ethnicity**

Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=133)	(N=1035)	(N=99)	(N=1209)
I'm only driving a short distance	55%	62%	47%	60%
I forgot to put it on	55%	52%	43%	53%
I'm in a rush	40%	40%	34%	40%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	42%	33%	30%	35%
I'm driving in light traffic	22%	24%	22%	23%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	16%	22%	19%	21%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	11%	9%	11%	9%
People I am with are not wearing belts	15%	8%	11%	9%
Don't like being told what to do	10%	22%	23%	20%
Other	5%	8%	4%	8%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

College graduates were more likely than those with fewer years of formal schooling to give “driving only a short distance” as the primary reason for the occasions they don’t use seat belts, and less likely to cite discomfort. Seat belt non-users who had not completed high school composed only 136 cases in the study, thus once again readers should exercise caution in interpreting the numbers.

Table 26
Driver Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts
By Education

Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=136)	(N=403)	(N=342)	(N=430)
I'm only driving a short distance	55%	59%	56%	65%
I forgot to put it on	59%	55%	48%	50%
I'm in a rush	49%	40%	35%	39%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	43%	40%	31%	28%
I'm driving in light traffic	23%	25%	20%	23%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	27%	22%	16%	22%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	6%	8%	11%	10%
People I am with are not wearing belts	9%	12%	11%	4%
Don't like being told what to do	21%	25%	20%	16%
Other	6%	9%	8%	6%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Driving only a short distance and forgetting to put it on were the most frequent reasons given for non-use of seat belts by all the driver groups listed below. Pickup truck drivers were more likely than other drivers to say they do not wear their seat belt because they don't like being told what to do or that the probability of a crash was too low. Once again readers should exercise caution in interpreting the numbers since two subgroups, van/minivan's (118) and SUV's (205) contained few cases on which estimates are based.

Table 27
Driver Reasons For Non-Use Of Seat Belts
By Primary Vehicle Driven

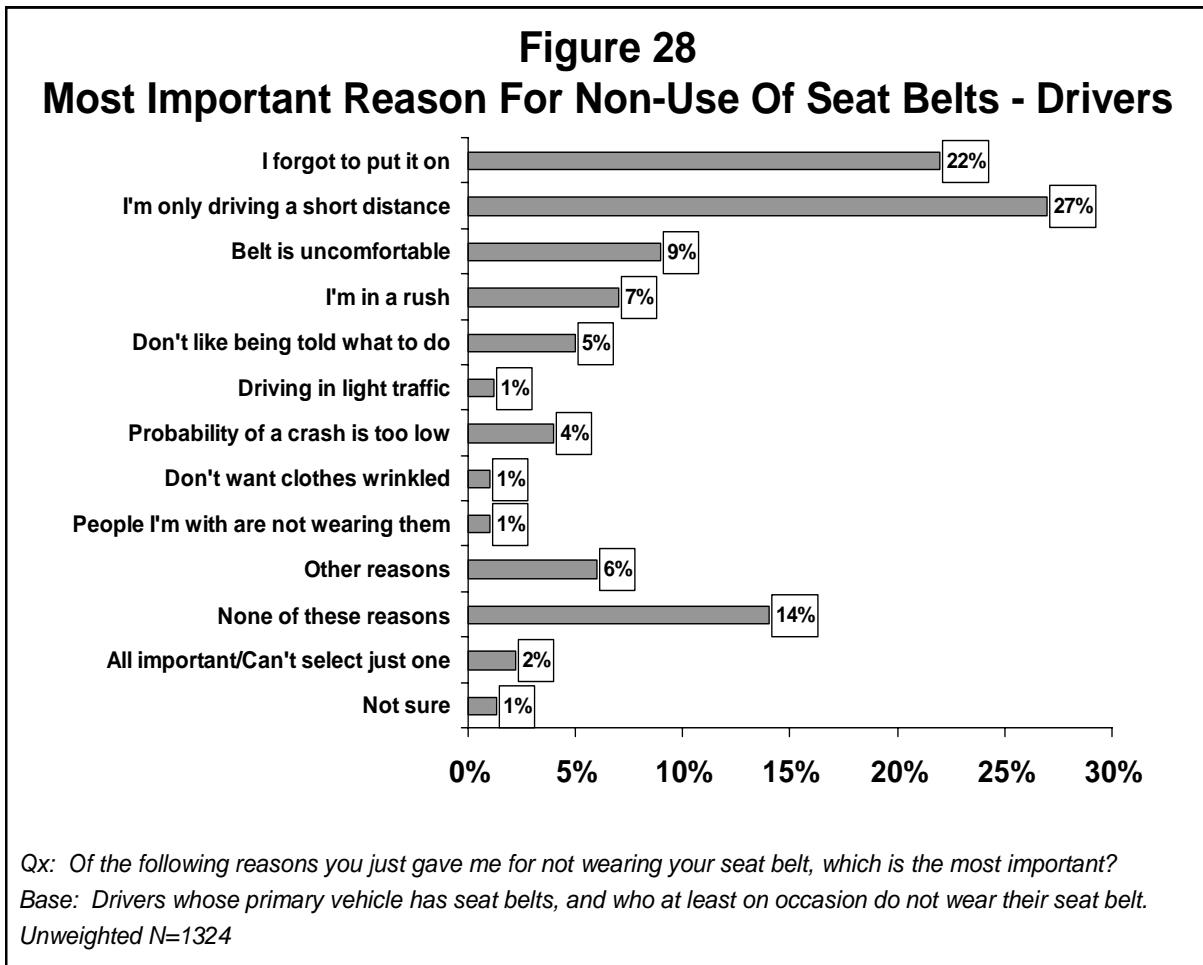
Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=669)	(N=118)	(N=309)	(N=205)
I'm only driving a short distance	58%	52%	59%	68%
I forgot to put it on	51%	48%	54%	55%
I'm in a rush	39%	36%	40%	42%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	35%	27%	39%	31%
I'm driving in light traffic	24%	15%	25%	22%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	19%	20%	27%	19%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	10%	9%	7%	8%
People I am with are not wearing belts	10%	5%	11%	3%
Don't like being told what to do	19%	16%	27%	18%
Other	7%	9%	8%	8%

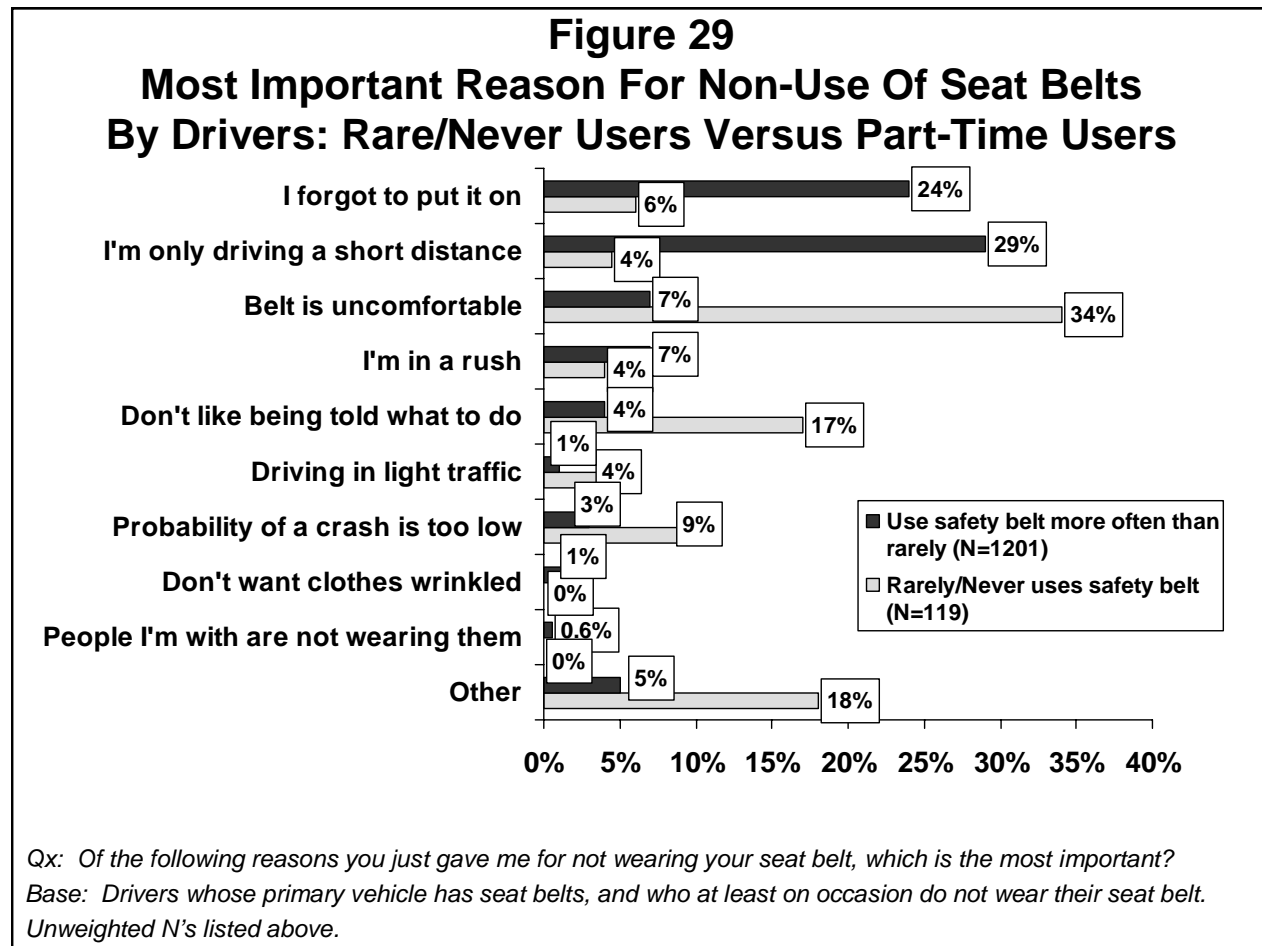
Most Important Reason For Non-Use Of Seat Belts

The most important reasons given for not wearing seat belts were usually that they were driving just a short distance (27%) or they forgot (22%). Discomfort (9%) ranked third as the single most important reason for non-use. In addition, 14% of drivers did not agree that any of the listed reasons applied to them and also did not volunteer any reason for non-use. This inability or reluctance to provide a reason for non-use contrasts with data summarized earlier in this chapter showing that almost all drivers gave one or more reasons why they wore their seat belt.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

As stated earlier, the vast majority of non-use occurred among persons who indicated at least some use of seat belts. Figure 29 shows that the most important reasons for non-use among part-time belt users were only driving a short distance (29%) or that they forgot (24%). For those who rarely or never use their seat belt discomfort (34%) and the dislike of being told what to do (17%) predominated. "Other" reasons were mentioned by 18% of those rarely or never using seat belts.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

There was little difference between the sexes in the primary reason for non-use of seat belts. The youngest drivers were more likely to cite forgetting and less likely to say it was because they were only traveling a short distance. However, those numbers are based on a small number of cases.

Table 28
Most Important Reason For Driver Non-Use Of
Seat Belts By Gender And Age

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=582)	(N=742)	(N=116)	(N=1039)	(N=154)
I'm only driving a short distance	26%	27%	17%	28%	29%
I forgot to put it on	23%	22%	35%	20%	26%
I'm in a rush	8%	6%	12%	7%	1%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	9%	10%	6%	10%	6%
I'm driving in light traffic	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	1%	5%	7%	3%	4%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
People I am with are not wearing belts	1%	*	*	1%	--
Don't like being told what to do	5%	5%	2%	6%	4%
Other reason	6%	6%	4%	6%	7%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Hispanics (18%) were less likely than Non-Hispanics (27%) to claim driving a short distance as the primary reason for not wearing their seat belt. Whites were less likely than Blacks to cite forgetting to fasten the seatbelt as the primary reason for non-use (22% to 31%).

Table 29
Most Important Reason For Driver Non-Use Of Seat Belts By Race And Ethnicity

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=133)	(N=1035)	(N=99)	(N=1209)
I'm only driving a short distance	24%	28%	18%	27%
I forgot to put it on	31%	22%	19%	23%
I'm in a rush	7%	6%	6%	7%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	9%	9%	7%	10%
I'm driving in light traffic	--	1%	4%	1%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	2%	4%	2%	4%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	5%	1%	1%	1%
People I am with are not wearing belts	1%	*	1%	*
Don't like being told what to do	2%	5%	6%	5%
Other reason	4%	6%	7%	6%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	4%	2%	3%	2%

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

College graduates were more likely than those who had not graduated college to say that “driving a short distance” was their primary reason for non-use of seat belts. Drivers who had not graduated high school were more likely than the other groups to identify “forgetting” as their primary reason for non-use.

Table 30
Most Important Reason For Driver Non-Use Of
Seat Belts By Education

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=136)	(N=403)	(N=342)	(N=430)
I'm only driving a short distance	15%	23%	24%	37%
I forgot to put it on	31%	22%	23%	19%
I'm in a rush	12%	4%	8%	6%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	8%	11%	8%	8%
I'm driving in light traffic	1%	2%	1%	2%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	3%	5%	3%	3%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	1%	1%	2%	1%
People I am with are not wearing belts	*	*	2%	--
Don't like being told what to do	4%	8%	4%	3%
Other reason	5%	7%	7%	5%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	3%	3%	1%	2%

*Less than 0.5%. --No cases.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

SUV drivers were more likely than other drivers to give “only driving a short distance” (34%) as their primary reason for non-use of seat belts. Drivers of van/minivans were more likely to attribute their non-use of seat belts primarily to “forgetting” (29%).

Table 31
Most Important Reason For Driver Non-Use Of
Seat Belts By Primary Vehicle Driven

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

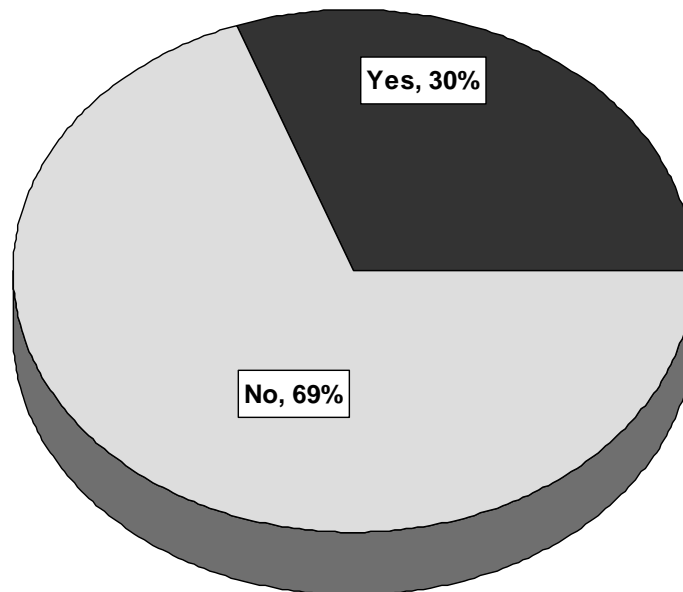
Reason	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=669)	(N=118)	(N=309)	(N=205)
I'm only driving a short distance	25%	14%	29%	34%
I forgot to put it on	22%	29%	22%	20%
I'm in a rush	7%	10%	3%	8%
The seat belt is uncomfortable	9%	7%	11%	10%
I'm driving in light traffic	2%	1%	2%	1%
The probability of being in a crash is too low	3%	4%	4%	4%
Don't want my clothes wrinkled	2%	--	*	1%
People I am with are not wearing belts	1%	1%	1%	--
Don't like being told what to do	4%	6%	7%	4%
Other reason	5%	8%	8%	4%
Can't say one is most important/All are important	3%	2%	1%	1%

*Less than 0.5%.

What Drivers Dislike Or Find Annoying About Seat Belts

All drivers, whether or not they wore their seat belts regularly, were asked if there was anything that they particularly disliked or found annoying about wearing them. Nearly one-third answered “Yes” (30%). Almost all of the rest responded that there was not any particular thing they disliked (69%). Less than 1 percent (0.1%) said they did not know.

Figure 30
Dislike Or Find Seat Belts Annoying: Drivers



Qx: *Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?*

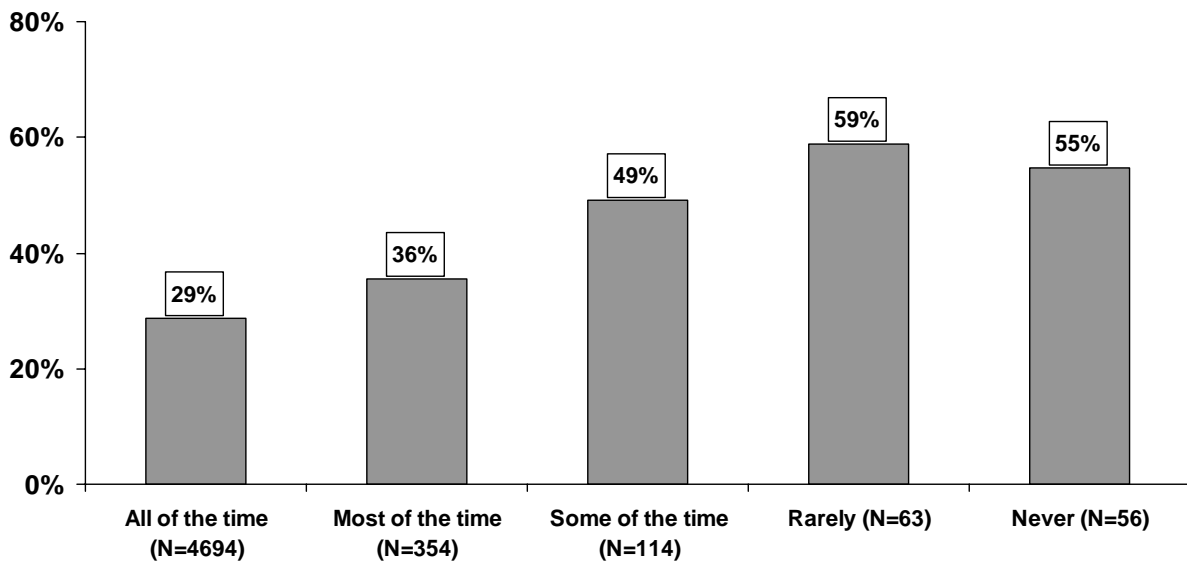
Base: *Drives a motor vehicle that has seat belts.*

Unweighted N=5289

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Not surprisingly, persons who infrequently wore their seat belt were most likely to report annoyances. Whereas 29% of drivers who reported wearing their seat belts “all of the time” while driving said there was something particularly annoying about the belt, 36% of “most of the time” users and 49% of “some of the time” users voiced similar complaints. More than one-half of those who rarely (59%) or never (55%) wore their seat belt said that there was something they disliked or found annoying about it.

Figure 31
Dislike Or Find Seat Belts Annoying
By Reported Belt Use: Drivers



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Qx: Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?

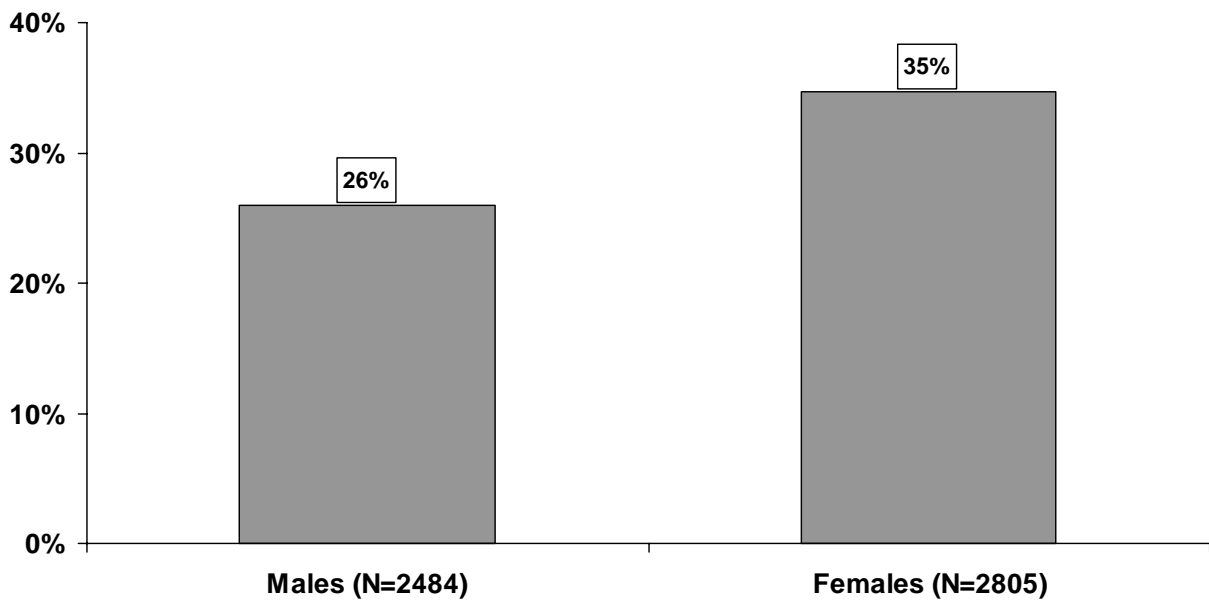
Base: Drives a motor vehicle that has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Although the previous chapter showed females more likely than males to wear seat belts, females also were more likely to complain about the devices. More than three-in-ten females (35%) said there was something they particularly disliked or found annoying about wearing their seat belt compared to one-in-four males (26%).

Figure 32
Dislike Or Find Seat Belts Annoying By Gender



Qx: *Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?*

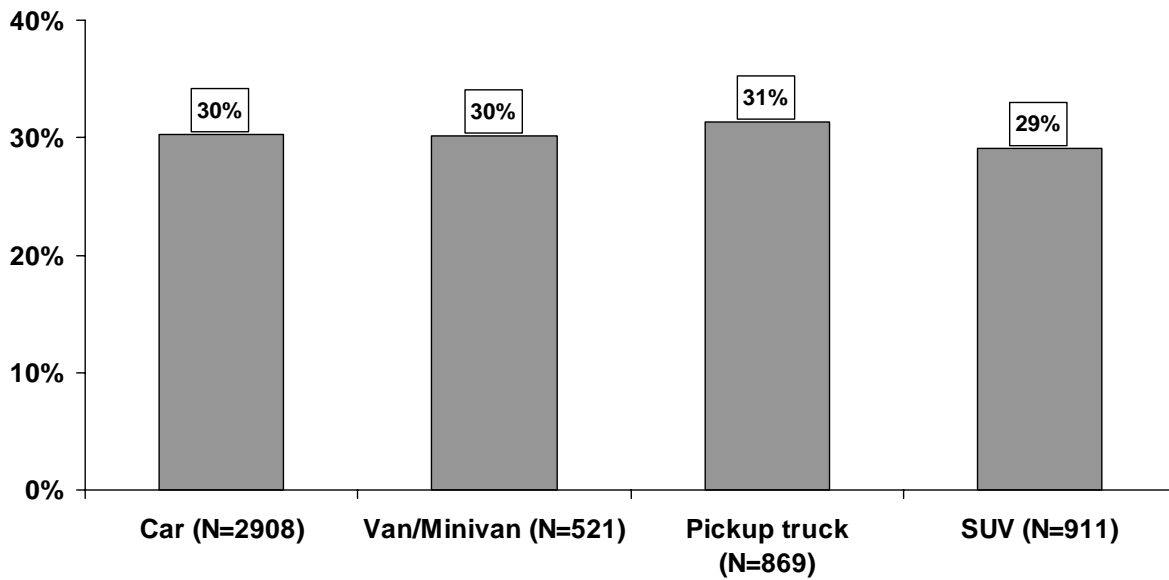
Base: *Drives a motor vehicle that has seat belts.*

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

There was no appreciable difference between drivers of different vehicle types in whether there was something that particularly annoyed them about wearing seat belts.

Figure 33
Dislike Or Find Seat Belts Annoying
By Type Of Primary Vehicle Driven



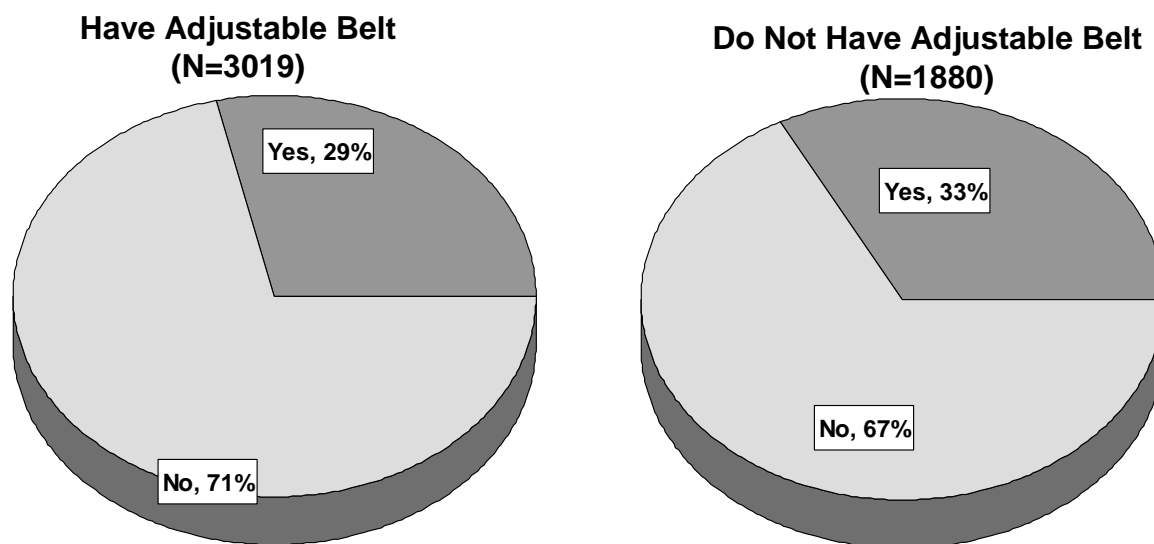
Qx: Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?

Base: Drives a motor vehicle that has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

If drivers reported that the shoulder belt in their primary vehicle was adjustable, they were less likely to express annoyance about seat belts. Whereas 29% of respondents with adjustable shoulder belts in their primary vehicle said there was something they particularly disliked or found annoying about wearing their seat belt, 33% without adjustable shoulder belts did the same. When only the drivers who said they had actually used the adjustable feature of their shoulder belts are considered, 30% expressed annoyance with seat belts.

Figure 34
Dislike Or Find Seat Belts Annoying By Presence Of Adjustable Shoulder Belt In Primary Vehicle



Qx: *Shoulder belts are usually attached to the door or frame behind the driver's left shoulder. In some vehicles, this attachment can be moved up or down to adjust the shoulder belt. Is this attachment adjustable in your vehicle?*

Qx: *Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?*

Base: *Drives a motor vehicle that has seat belts across both the lap and shoulder or across the shoulder only.*

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

If respondents said there was something they particularly disliked or found annoying about seat belts, they were asked to specify what bothered them. The most common complaint involved pressure or pain on various parts of the body (37%). Females (45%) especially experienced this type of discomfort compared to males (28%), particularly being choked by the seat belt (35% to 17%). Males were more likely to say the seat belt was too confining (22%) than females (14%).

Table 32
What Drivers Dislike Or Find Annoying
About Seat Belts

Qx: Is there anything that you particularly dislike or find annoying about wearing your seat belt?

Qx: What is it that you dislike or find annoying? Anything else?

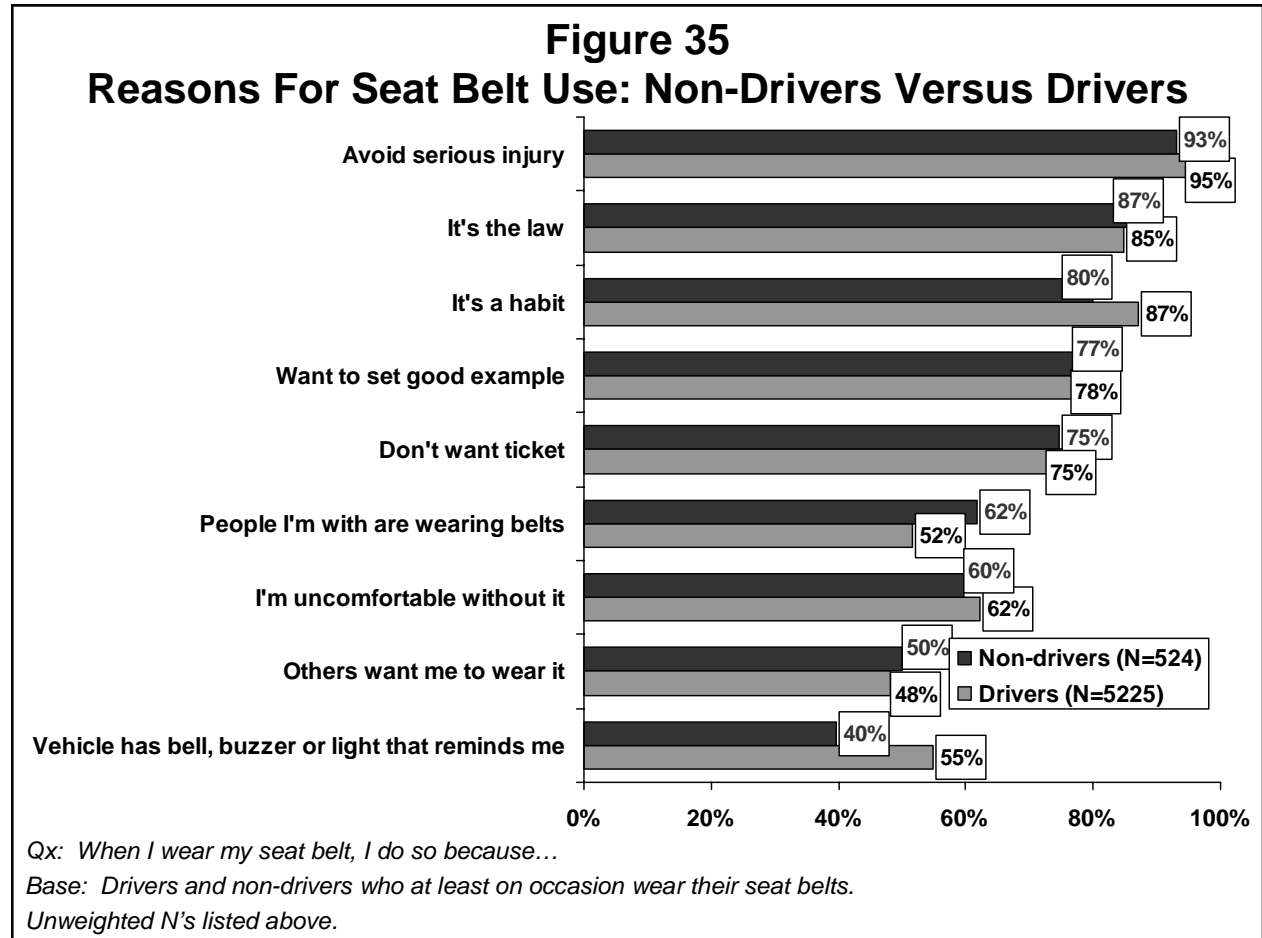
Base: Drivers who dislike or find something annoying about seat belts.

Dislikes/annoyances	Total (N=1647)	Males (N=646)	Females (N=1001)
Discomfort: body pressure/pain	37%	28%	45%
Pressure on my neck/Chokes me/Cuts across my neck	27%	17%	35%
Pressure on my shoulder/Shoulder strap too tight	8%	9%	7%
Pressure on my chest/Strap doesn't fit my chest	3%	3%	4%
Any other body pressure mentions	*	*	*
Discomfort: body irritation	5%	3%	6%
Irritates/chafes my skin/Rash	5%	3%	6%
Any other body irritation mentions	*	--	*
Discomfort: other	27%	30%	25%
Uncomfortable (unspecified)	27%	29%	25%
Any other discomfort mentions	*	1%	*
Confining	17%	22%	14%
Feel restricted/Too confining/Constricting	17%	21%	13%
Any other movement restrictions mentions	*	*	1%
Other	25%	27%	23%
Wrinkles my clothes	8%	5%	10%
Need to adjust seat belt for my size	2%	1%	2%
Seat belts are a nuisance/hassle/annoyance	4%	5%	3%
Invasion of privacy/Taking away constitutional rights	2%	4%	1%
Seatbelt tightens unexpectedly	2%	3%	1%
Any other miscellaneous mentions	7%	9%	5%
Not sure/No answer	*	*	*

*Less than 0.5%. -- No cases. Numbers do not add to 100% due to multiple response.

Reasons For Seat Belt Use By Non-Drivers

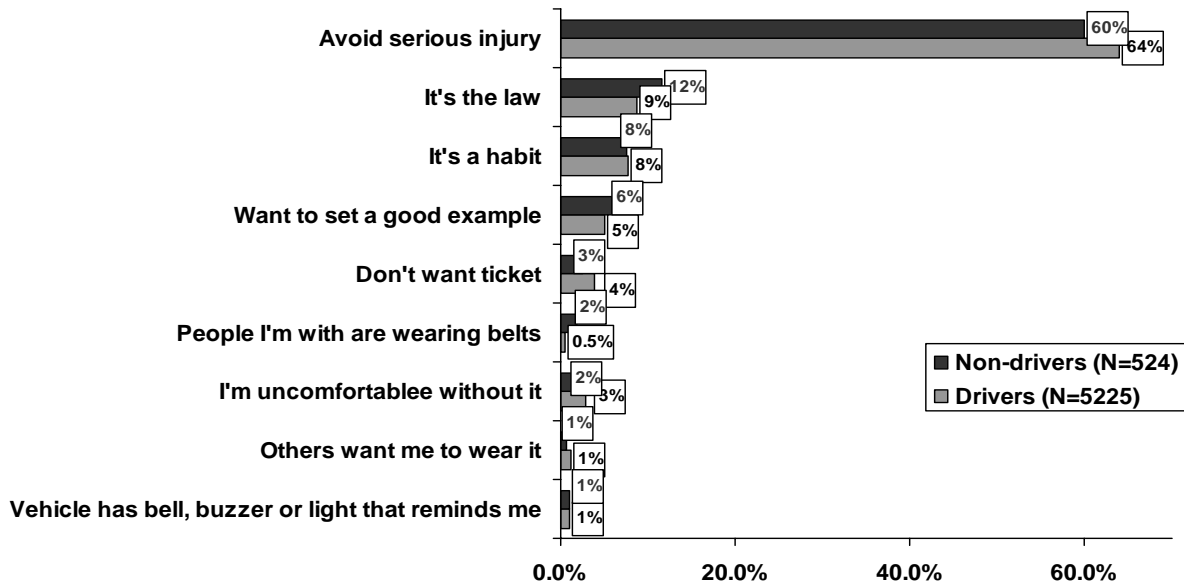
Interviewers asked non-drivers their reasons for seat belt use while riding as passengers in motor vehicles. The approach was the same as that used with drivers: nine different reasons were read, one at a time, and non-drivers were asked whether or not each reason was a factor in their use of seat belts. They were also given an opportunity to volunteer any reasons for their seat belt use. Non-drivers were more likely than drivers to say they wear their seat belt because other people in the vehicle were wearing seat belts. Drivers were more likely than non-drivers to say they wear their seat belt because the vehicle had a bell, buzzer, or light that reminded them.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

By far the most important reason for seat belt use by non-drivers (60%), as with drivers (64%), was to avoid serious injury. The “law” ranked a distant second for both groups.

Figure 36
Most Important Reason For Seat Belt Use:
Non-Drivers Versus Drivers



Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers and non-drivers who at least on occasion wear their seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

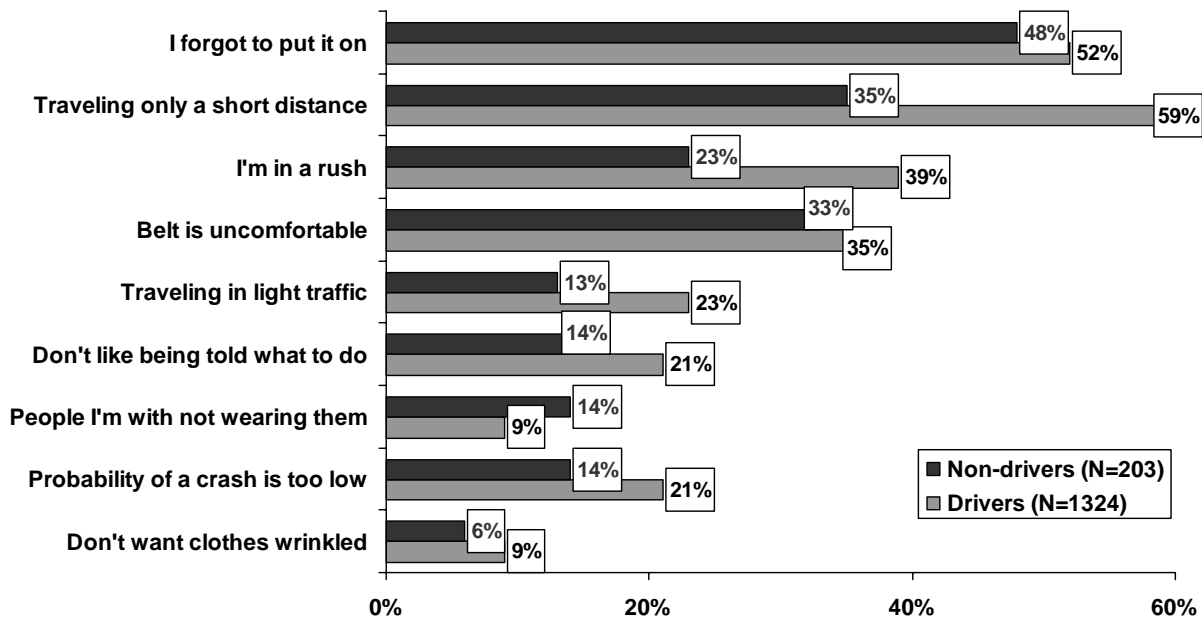
Non-Drivers' Reasons For Not Using Seat Belts

Non-drivers who at least sometimes did not wear a seat belt while riding were asked their reasons for non-use. As with drivers, interviewers read nine potential reasons to respondents. For each one, non-drivers were asked to agree or disagree that they sometimes did not wear their belt for that reason. They were then given an opportunity to volunteer other reasons why they did not use their seat belts. Readers are cautioned that the number of non-drivers (N=203) was relatively small in these analyses.

The most commonly cited reason was that non-drivers forgot to wear their seat belt (48%). Other frequently cited reasons were that they were only riding a short distance (35%), the seat belt was uncomfortable (33%), and they were in a rush (23%). Less than one-in-five non-drivers attributed at least some of their non-use to riding in light traffic (13%), they don't like being told what to do (14%), their companions were not wearing seat belts (14%), or the probability of a crash was too low (14%).

The largest differences between drivers and non-drivers in the reasons given for not wearing seat belts occurred in the "short distance," "rushed," and "traveling in light traffic" response categories. Drivers were more likely to attribute non-use to traveling only a short distance (59% to 35%), being in a rush (39% to 23%) and traveling in light traffic (23% to 13%).

Figure 37
Reasons For Not Wearing A Seat Belt:
Non-Drivers Versus Drivers



Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Base: Drivers and non-drivers who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belts.

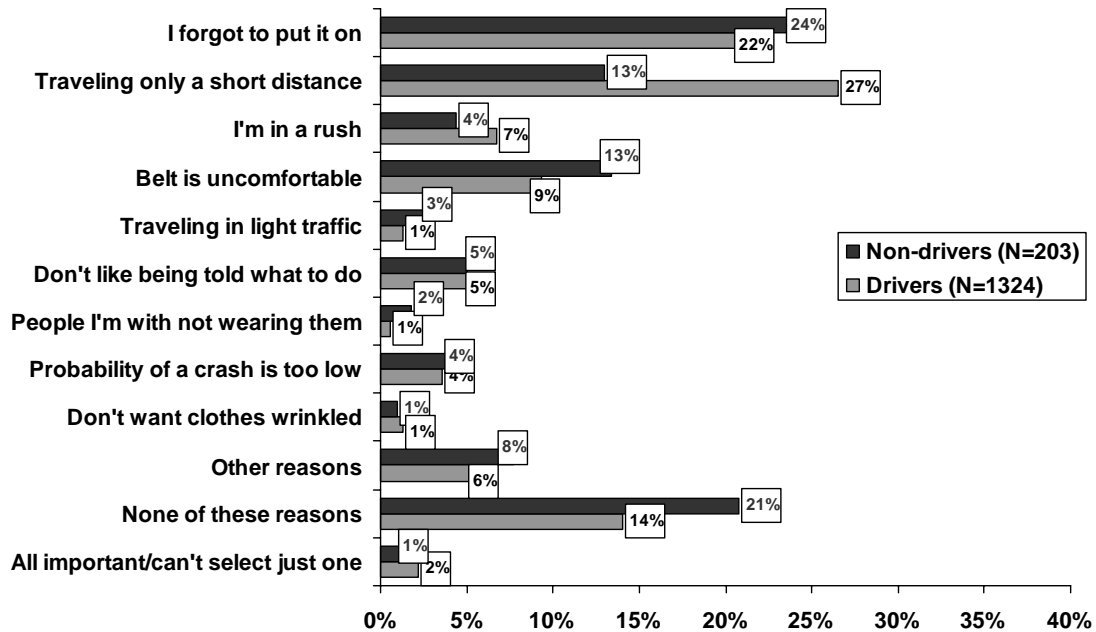
Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

When asked for the most important reason for not wearing seat belts, forgetting ranked first among non-drivers; about one-in-four (24%) gave it as the chief cause. Discomfort (13%) and traveling only a short distance (13%) followed in frequency. However, about one-in-five non-drivers (21%) did not agree that any of the listed reasons applied to them and also did not volunteer any reason.

Drivers were twice as likely as non-drivers to answer that the most important reason they did not wear their seat belt was because they were only going a short distance (27% versus 13%). Reluctance or inability to give a reason for non-use was more likely among non-drivers (21%) as among drivers (14%).

Figure 38
Most Important Reason For Not Wearing A Seat Belt:
Non-Drivers Versus Drivers



Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers and non-drivers who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 SURVEY RESULTS

**CHAPTER 3: ATTITUDES CONCERNING THE UTILITY OF
SEAT BELTS, RISK PERCEPTIONS, AND FATALISM**

Background On Attitude Section

In 1998, the Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey introduced a section on attitudes and perceptions related to seat belt use. For the 2007 survey, the section consisted of a series of eight statements that interviewers read to the respondents. After reading each statement, the interviewers asked the respondents if they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, somewhat disagreed, or strongly disagreed.

The section served several purposes: to assess current messaging strategies, to corroborate and quantify with a large sample earlier focus group findings concerning impediments to seat belt use, and to provide other strategic information for addressing reasons for non-use. Thus the content for this section was derived from previous research as well as current program activity.

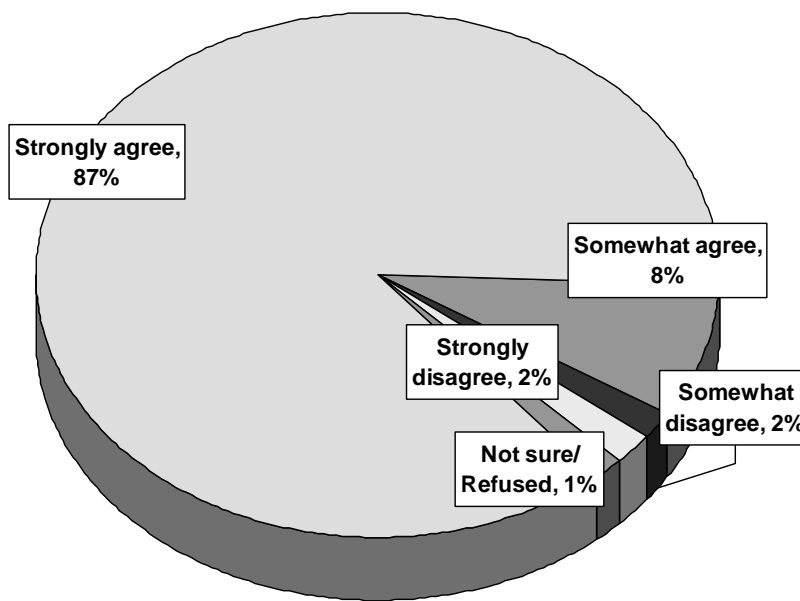
This chapter summarizes results from those items that explored the perceived utility of seat belts, and perceptions of risk related to seat belt use. Attitude items that involved perceptions of enforcement of seat belt laws are addressed in the next chapter (Chapter 4).

Since its inception in 1994, this survey has asked a question about fatalism.... the belief that all events are determined by fate and are therefore inevitable. Summarized responses to that question are included in this chapter because of similarities to other themes presented herein.

Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception And The Utility Of Seat Belts

The most basic question concerning the perceived usefulness of seat belts is whether the public believes they improve the chances of avoiding death or injury in a crash. The survey asked respondents their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement “If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.” Nearly nine-in-ten persons (87%) strongly agreed with the statement. Another 8% somewhat agreed, bringing the total level of agreement to 95%.

Figure 39
Would Want Seat Belt On In An Accident



Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.

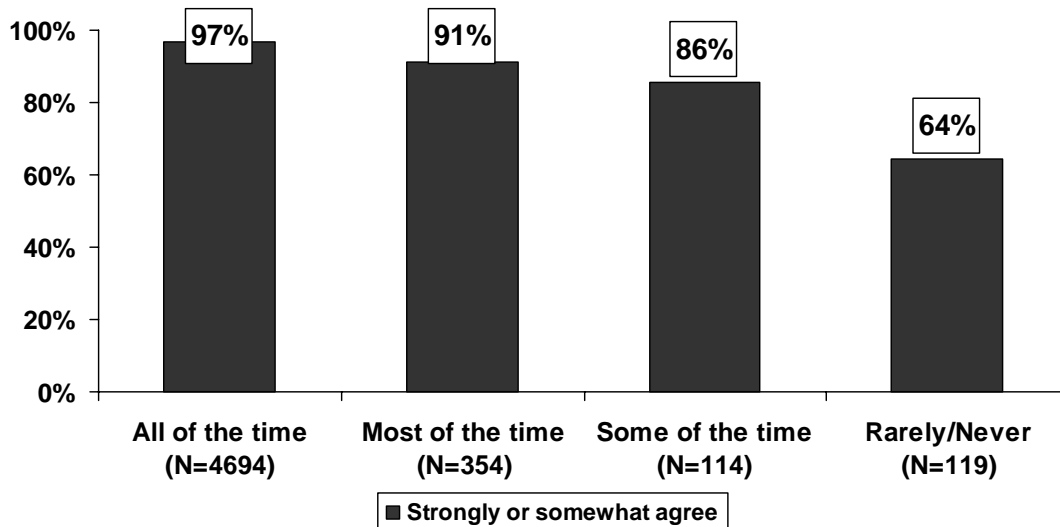
Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers who regularly wore their seat belts were most likely to strongly or somewhat agree with the statement that they would want to have their seat belt on if they were in an accident. Yet even among drivers who said they never or only rarely wore their seat belts, more than six-in-ten (64%) either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

Figure 40
Would Want Seat Belt On In An Accident
By Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

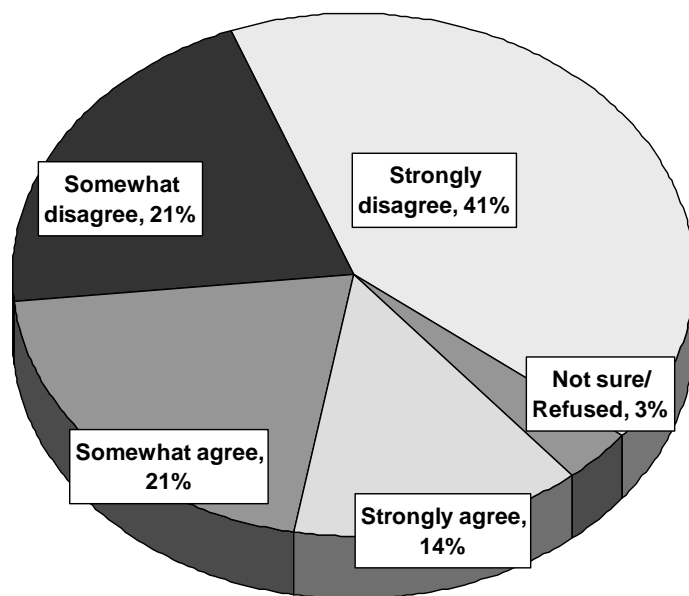
Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

NHTSA has conducted a number of focus groups with target populations characterized by low seat belt use. One of the more common sentiments expressed in these groups was that “seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.” According to the national data obtained in this survey, more than one-third (34%¹¹) of the general public agreed with this statement, with 14% strongly agreeing.

Figure 41
Seat Belts Are Just As Likely To Harm You As Help You



Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

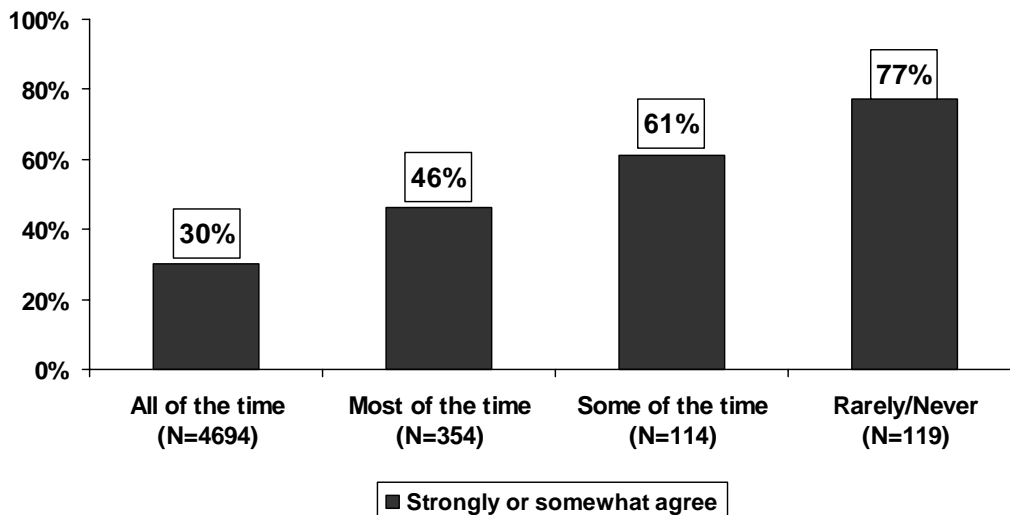
Unweighted N=5908

¹¹ The number does not equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Even among drivers who reported wearing their seat belt “all of the time” while driving, almost one-third (30%) either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement that “seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.” For infrequent seat belt users, more than half held this opinion.

Figure 42
Seat Belts Are Just As Likely To Harm You As Help
By Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.

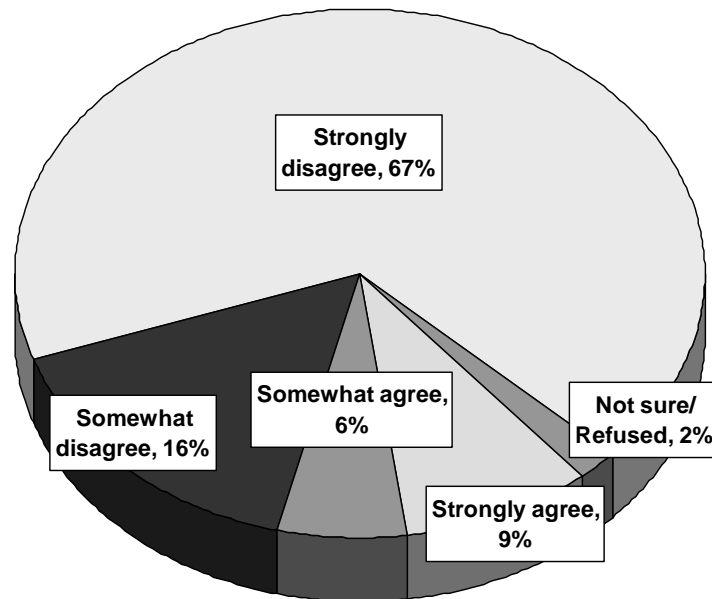
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Whereas public anxiety over potentially unsafe or unhealthy outcomes may lead to adoption of prescribed safety behaviors, there sometimes is a danger that the intervention itself becomes an anxiety-producing cue that people seek to avoid because of its connection to the negative outcome. This survey explored that issue by getting reactions to the statement “Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.” Most persons refuted the notion; over two-thirds (67%) strongly disagreed. However, 15% of the population indicated some level of agreement with the statement.

Figure 43
Putting On A Seat Belt Makes Me Worry More About Being In An Accident



Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.

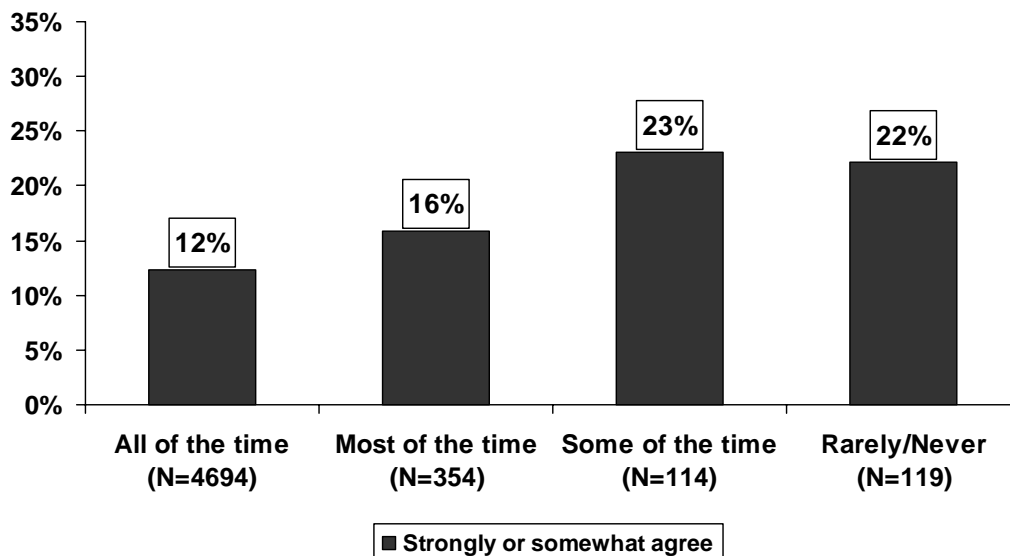
Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Increased anxiety about getting into an accident when wearing a seat belt was expressed more often by persons who only sometimes (23%) or rarely/never (22%) used their seat belt.

Figure 44
Putting On A Seat Belt Makes Me Worry More
By Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

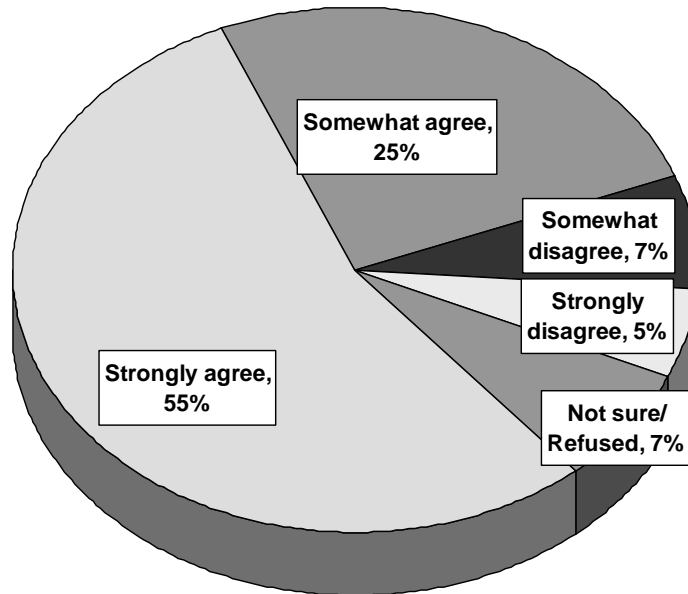
Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

Part-time seat belt users often said they did not use their seat belt because they were “driving just a short distance” (see page 56). The 2007 Survey asked a question to see if driving close to home was considered a greater or lesser risk for being involved in a crash. The vast majority (80%) agreed with the statement “Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.”

Figure 45
Most Motor Vehicle Accidents Happen Within Five Miles Of Home



Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.

Base: Total population age 16+.

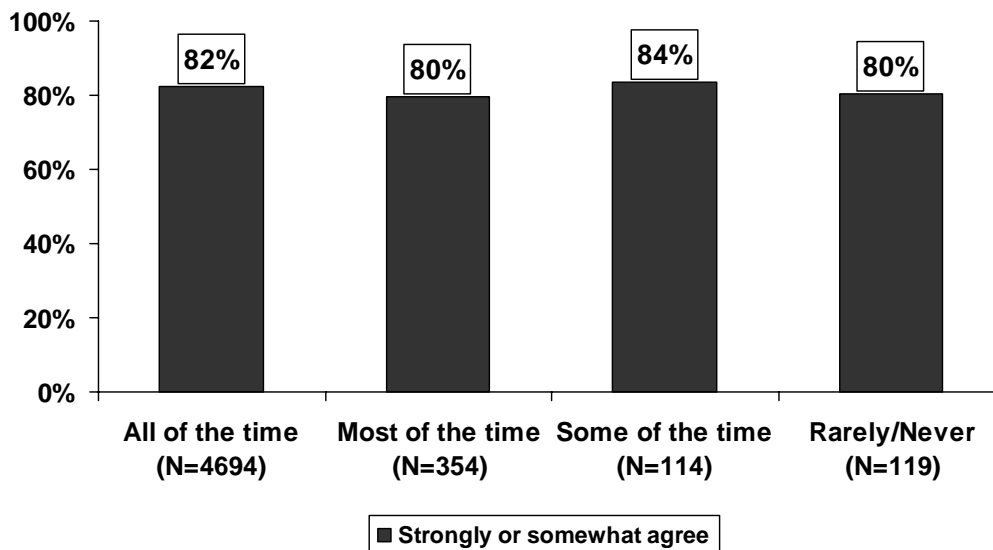
Unweighted 5908

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

There was little difference across levels of reported seat belt use in the proportion who agreed with the statement “Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.”

Figure 46
Most Motor Vehicle Accidents Happen Within Five Miles Of Home By Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

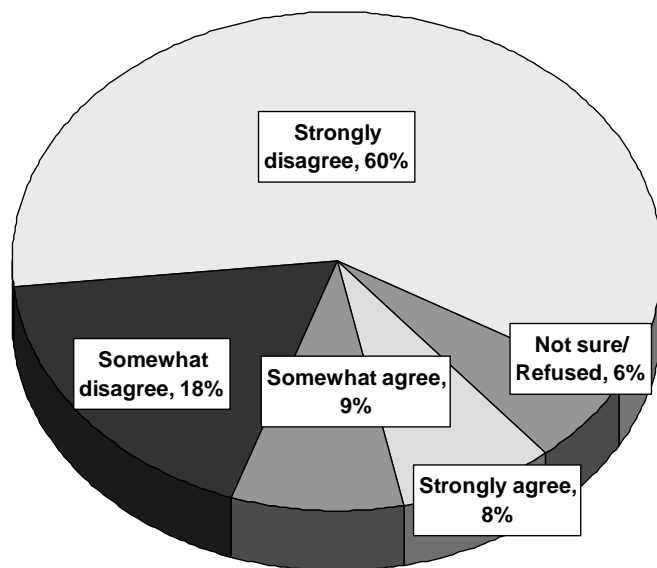
Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

Some focus group participants have commented that they thought crashes close to home would tend to involve “less energy” than those farther away. The survey explored whether this meant that the public was prone to discount the seriousness of potential crashes near where they live. The answer was generally “no” as nearly one-in-six persons (16%¹²) either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement that “An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.”

Figure 47
An Accident Close To Home Is Usually Not As Serious As An Accident Farther Away



Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.

Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

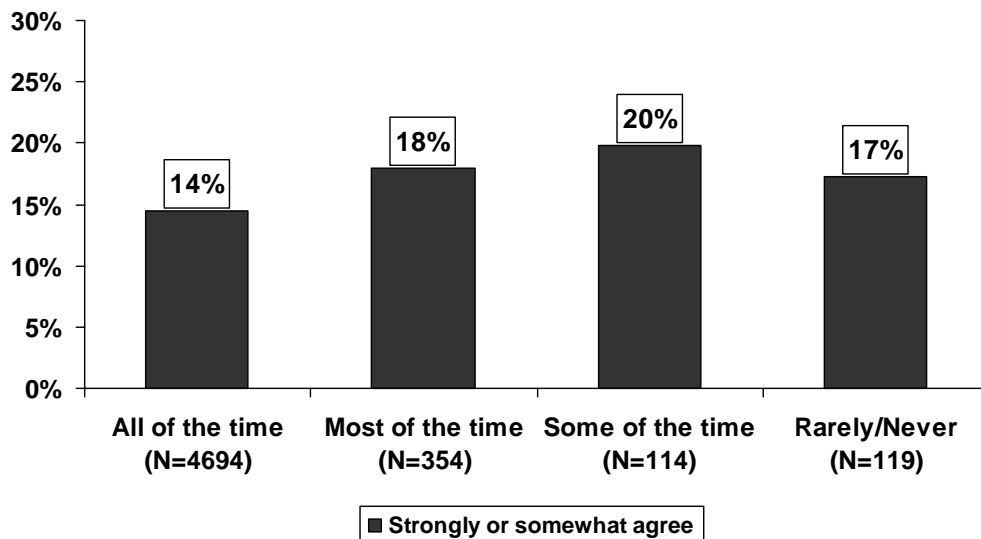
*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

¹² The number does not equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

No clear relationship emerged between agreement with the statement "An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away" and reported belt use.

Figure 48
Accidents Close To Home Are Less Serious
By Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

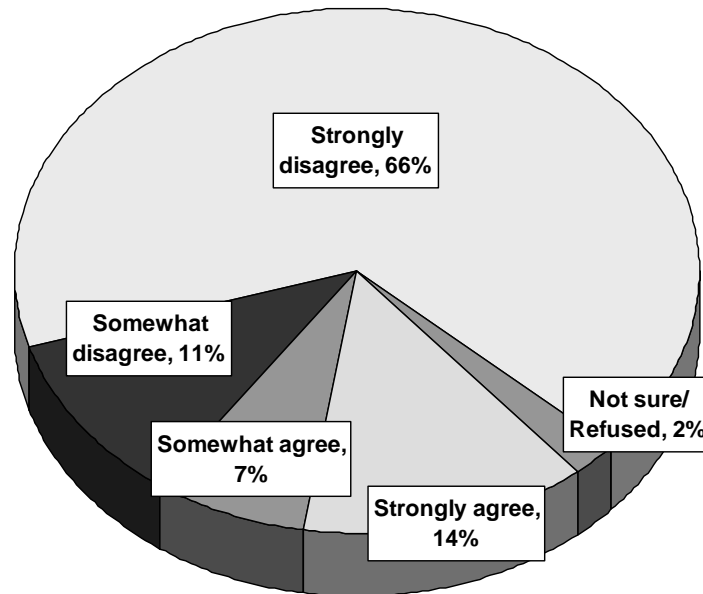
Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

To this point, the discussion on perception of risk has revolved around perceived risk of injury. But there may be social risks involved in seat belt use if usage runs counter to the group norm. The survey included an attitude statement addressing this type of situational pressure. About one-in-five persons (21%) either strongly or somewhat agreed that they would feel self-conscious around their friends if they wore a seat belt and their friends did not.

Figure 49
Would Feel Self-Conscious Around Friends
If Wore A Seat Belt And Friends Did Not



Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.*

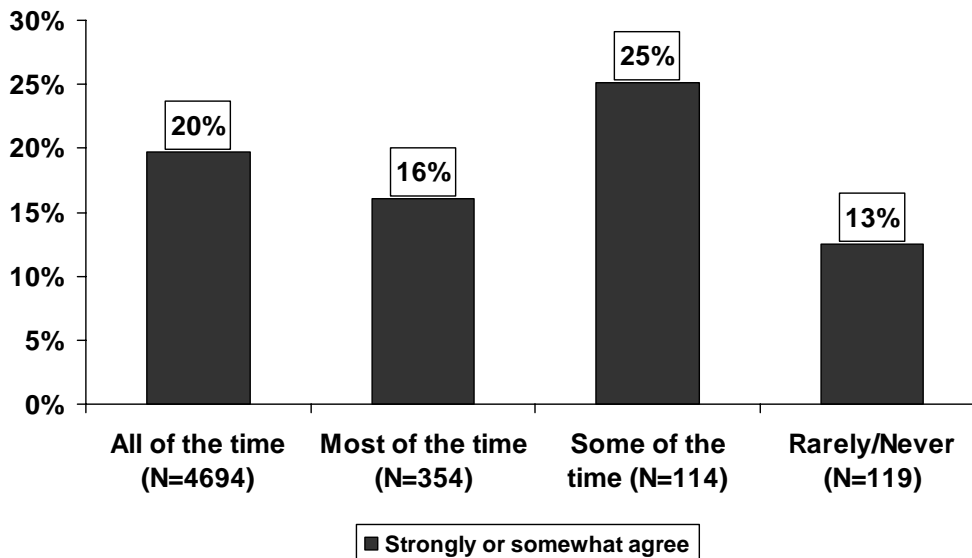
Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The percentage of respondents who acknowledged they would feel self-conscious if they wore their seat belts and their friends did not was highest among “some of the time” users (25%) and “all of the time” users (20%).

Figure 50
Would Feel Self-Conscious Around Friends
By Frequency Of Driver Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.

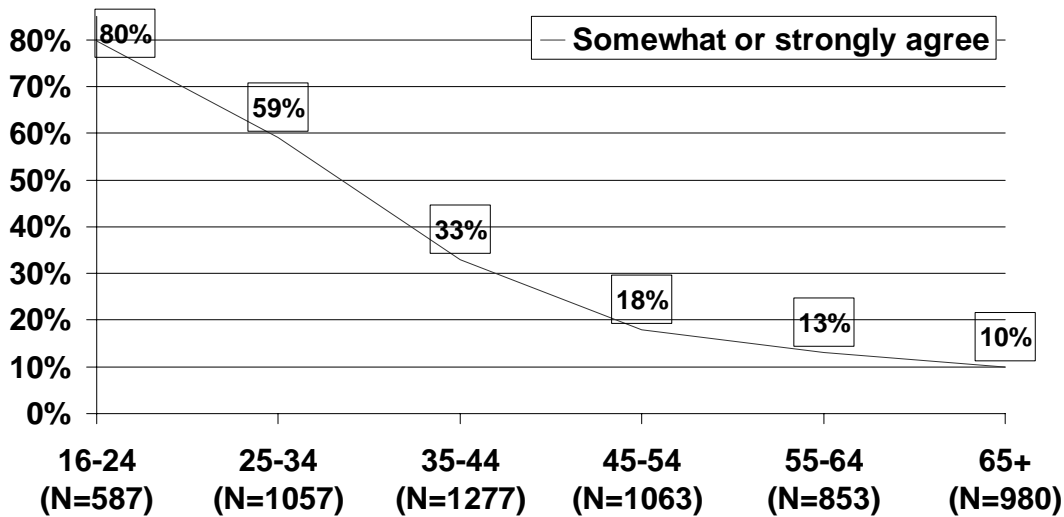
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The survey explored the parental influence issue by asking respondents their level of agreement with the statement “I have a habit of wearing a seat belt because my parents insisted I wear them when I was a child.” Among persons 16 to 24, 62% strongly agreed and 18% somewhat agreed (80% when combined). The level of agreement dropped sharply for older age groups, reflecting the lower belt use rates during their childhood years. It is unclear what the oldest age groups were responding to, as seat belts were not in the vehicle fleet during their childhood years.

Figure 51
Have A Habit Of Wearing A Seat Belt Because Parents Insisted I Wear Them When I Was A Child By Age Group



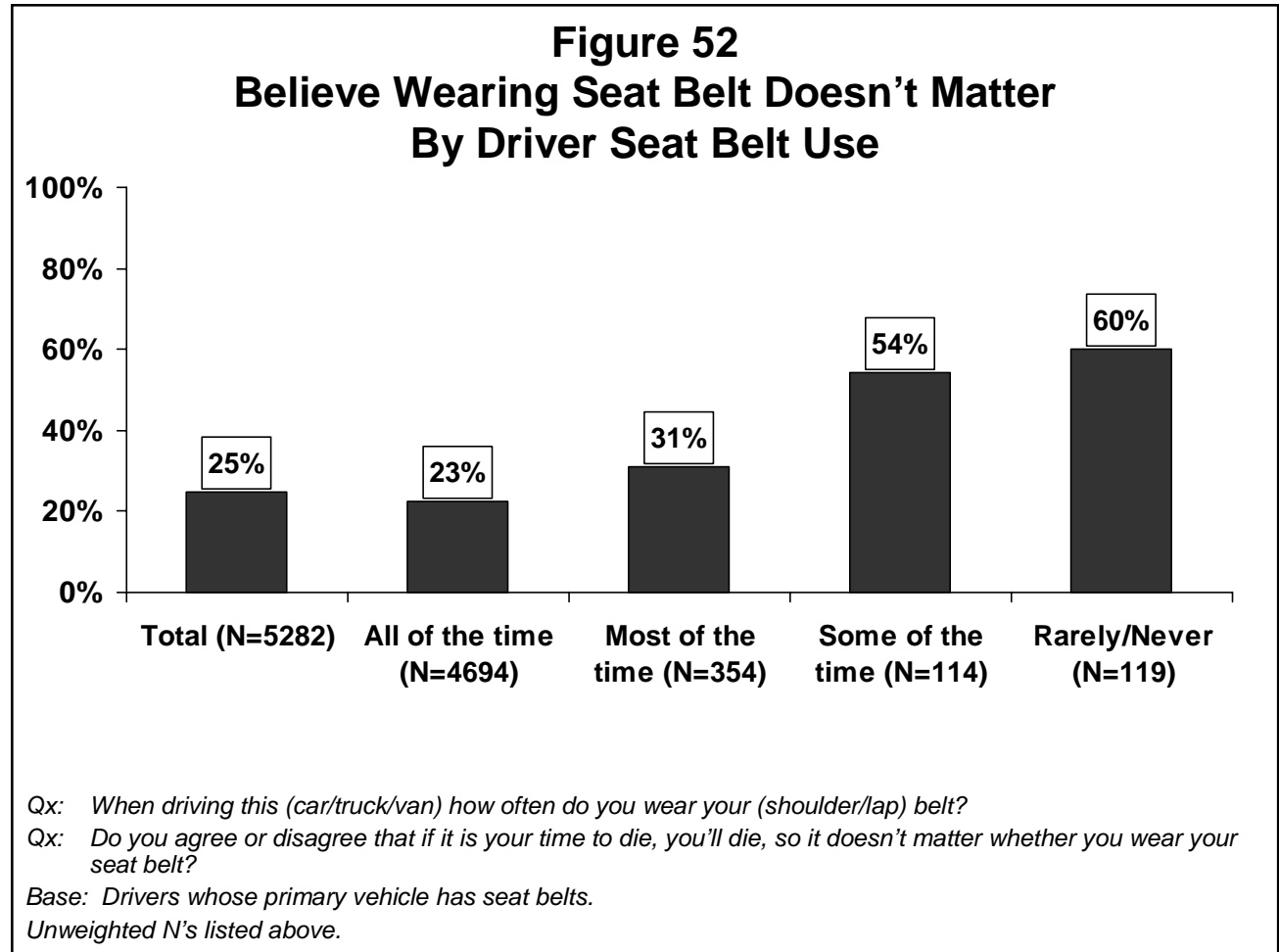
Qx: Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. I have a habit of wearing a seat belt because my parents insisted I wear them when I was a child.

Base: Total population 16+

Unweighted N's listed above.

Attitudes Toward Fatalism

The survey also explored the role of fatalism in seat belt non-use. Since the primary reason for seat belt use is to avoid injury, there is a question as to whether those who do not wear belts on a regular basis do not recognize the danger, or simply don't believe they can avoid it. Respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed with the statement "If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt." For the total population age 16 or older, 26% agreed. Among drivers only, 25% agreed. The data showed an inverse relationship between agreement with the fatalistic statement and drivers' reported belt use.



Gender And Age Differences In Attitudes

Few differences emerged between the sexes in their levels of agreement with the attitude statements described in the previous sections of this Chapter. The data suggested that males (24%) are more likely than females (17%) to feel self-conscious around their friends if they were the only one wearing a seat belt (see page 95).

Table 33
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Gender And Age

Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.*

Qx: *Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=3207)	(N=2701)	(N=344)	(N=4475)	(N=980)
Strongly or somewhat agree:					
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	96%	94%	94%	95%	96%
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	36%	33%	44%	34%	31%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	15%	15%	26%	14%	12%
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	16%	17%	28%	14%	20%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

More substantial differences on the attitude statements appeared with age. Almost one-half (44%) of 16-to-20 year-olds agreed that seat belts were as likely to harm as to help, compared to 34% of those 21-to-64 and 31% of those 65 and older. The youngest age group also was more likely to agree that an accident close to home was usually not as serious (28%), that putting on a seat belt makes them worry about being in an accident (26%), and that they would feel self-conscious if they were going against the group norm in wearing seat belts (27%).

**Table 33 (Continued)
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Gender And Age**

	Gender		Age		
	Female	Male	16-20	21-64	65+
	(N=3207)	(N=2701)	(N=344)	(N=4475)	(N=980)
Strongly or somewhat agree:					
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore my seat belt and they did not.	17%	24%	27%	20%	22%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	82%	79%	70%	83%	74%
Agree:					
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	25%	27%	23%	27%	23%

Racial And Ethnic Differences In Attitudes

Blacks and Hispanics differed markedly from Whites and non-Hispanics on perceived risk and the utility of seat belts. Whereas about one-third of Whites (30%) and non-Hispanics (32%) agreed that seat belts were just as likely to harm as help you, about half of Blacks (49%) and Hispanics (51%) agreed with the statement. Blacks and Hispanics also were more likely than Whites and non-Hispanics to agree that putting on a seat belt made them worry more about being in a crash, or that a crash close to home would not be as serious as one farther away.

Table 34
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Race And Ethnicity

Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.*

Qx: *Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=601)	(N=4370)	(N=659)	(N=5178)
Strongly or somewhat agree:				
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	94%	95%	97%	95%
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	49%	30%	51%	32%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	22%	11%	35%	12%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Blacks (28%) and Hispanics (37%) were about twice as likely as Whites (17%) and non-Hispanics (18%) to say they would feel self-conscious about using seat belts if their friends were not wearing them. Blacks (37%) and Hispanics (34%) were also more likely to agree with the fatalistic statement that wearing a seat belt did not matter because if it was your time to die, you'll die.

**Table 34(Continued)
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Race And Ethnicity**

	Race		Ethnicity	
	Black	White	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
	(N=601)	(N=4370)	(N=659)	(N=5178)
Strongly or somewhat agree:				
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	22%	13%	34%	14%
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.	28%	17%	37%	18%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	69%	85%	63%	83%
Agree:				
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	37%	23%	34%	25%

Differences In Attitudes By Educational Level

Education level also showed a relationship to the various attitudes. Generally, people with more years of formal schooling tended to be less fatalistic, less ambivalent about the injury reduction benefits of seat belts, and less self-conscious about going against group norms of non-use.

Table 35
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Education

Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.*

Qx: *Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=647)	(N=1660)	(N=1423)	(N=2111)
Strongly or somewhat agree:				
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	93%	94%	95%	97%
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	56%	40%	34%	20%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	34%	17%	12%	7%
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	33%	19%	13%	10%

Table 35 (Continued)
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts By Education

	Education			
	Grade 11 or less	High school grad	Some college	College grad
	(N=647)	(N=1660)	(N=1423)	(N=2111)
Strongly or somewhat agree:				
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.	35%	23%	18%	14%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	69%	78%	83%	86%
Agree:				
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	39%	31%	28%	15%

Differences In Attitudes By Type Of Primary Vehicle Driven

Since pickup truck drivers were less likely to report seat belt use compared to other drivers (see page 17), analyses were conducted to assess whether vehicle type corresponded with any differences in attitudes toward belt utility or fatalism. The results showed pickup truck drivers more likely than other motorists to agree seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you and more likely to agree with the fatalistic statement that one’s fate is already set so wearing a seat belt doesn’t matter.

Table 36
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts
By Type Of Primary Vehicle Driven

Qx: Now I’m going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.

Qx: Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you’ll die, so it doesn’t matter whether you wear your seat belt?

Base: Total population age 16+.

	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=2909)	(N=521)	(N=873)	(N=912)
Strongly or somewhat agree:				
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	96%	96%	92%	96%
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	33%	29%	37%	31%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	13%	12%	15%	11%

Table 36 (Continued)
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts
By Primary Vehicle Driven

	Primary vehicle			
	Car	Van/Minivan	Pickup truck	SUV
	(N=2909)	(N=521)	(N=873)	(N=912)
Strongly or Somewhat Agree:				
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	16%	13%	14%	12%
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.	20%	18%	20%	17%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	82%	81%	82%	85%
Agree:				
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	23%	24%	32%	22%

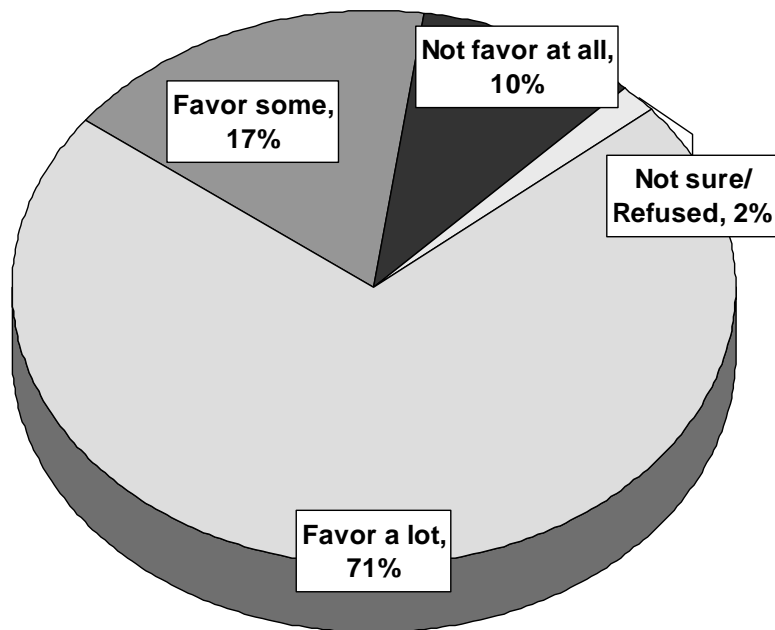
2007 SURVEY RESULTS

CHAPTER 4: ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERIENCE WITH SEAT BELT LAWS AND THEIR ENFORCEMENT

Attitudes Toward Seat Belt Laws

Respondents were asked their attitudes about enactment and enforcement of the laws, their knowledge of the seat belt laws in their own State, and their personal experience with seat belt law enforcement. Most persons age 16 and older (88%) favored requiring drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts. More than two-thirds (71%) favored such laws a lot, and an additional 17% favored them somewhat. Ten percent did not favor such laws at all while 2% was unsure.

Figure 53
Support For Front Seat Seat Belt Laws



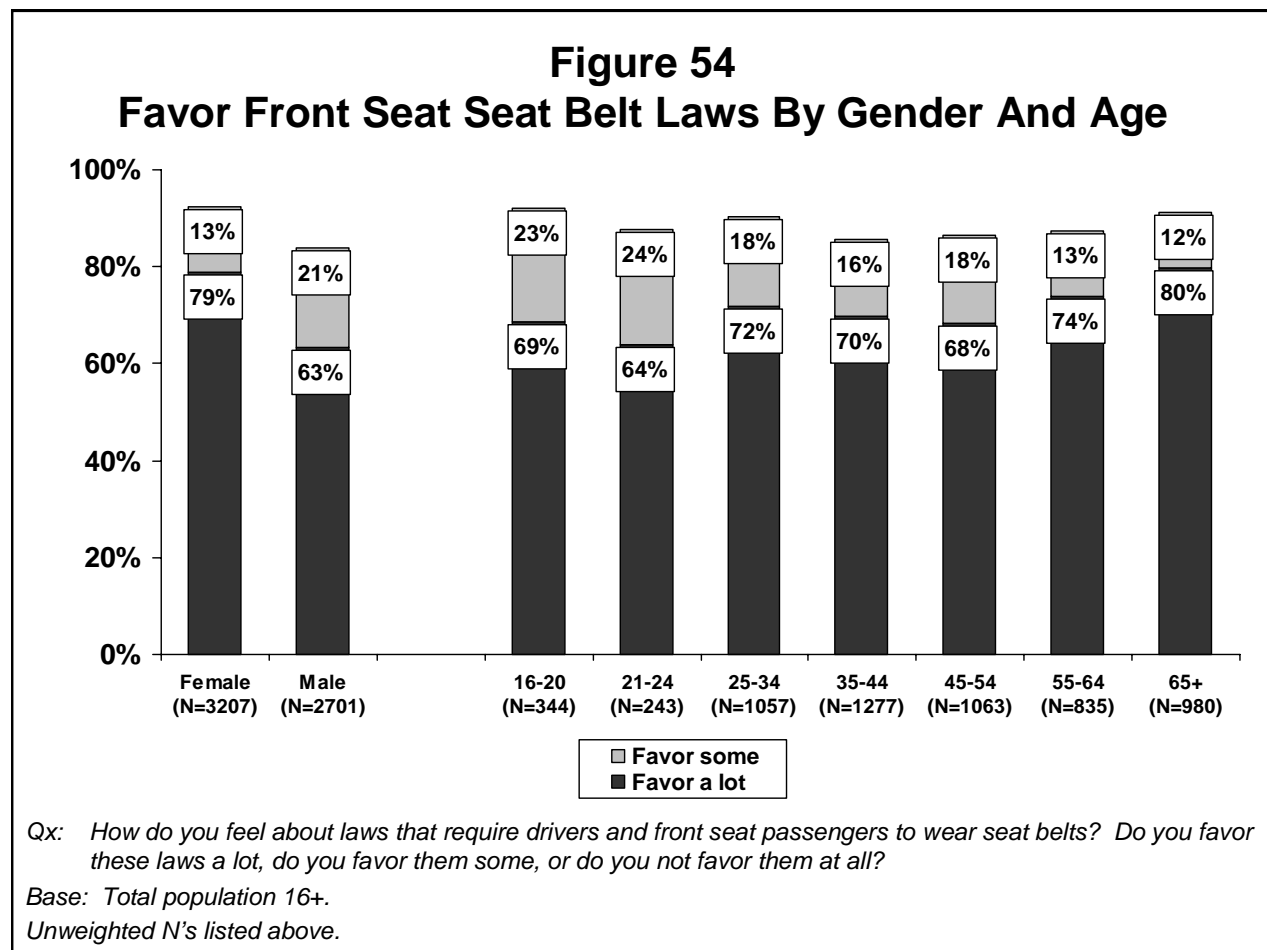
Qx: How do you feel about laws that require drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts? Do you favor these laws a lot, do you favor them some, or do you not favor these at all?

Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

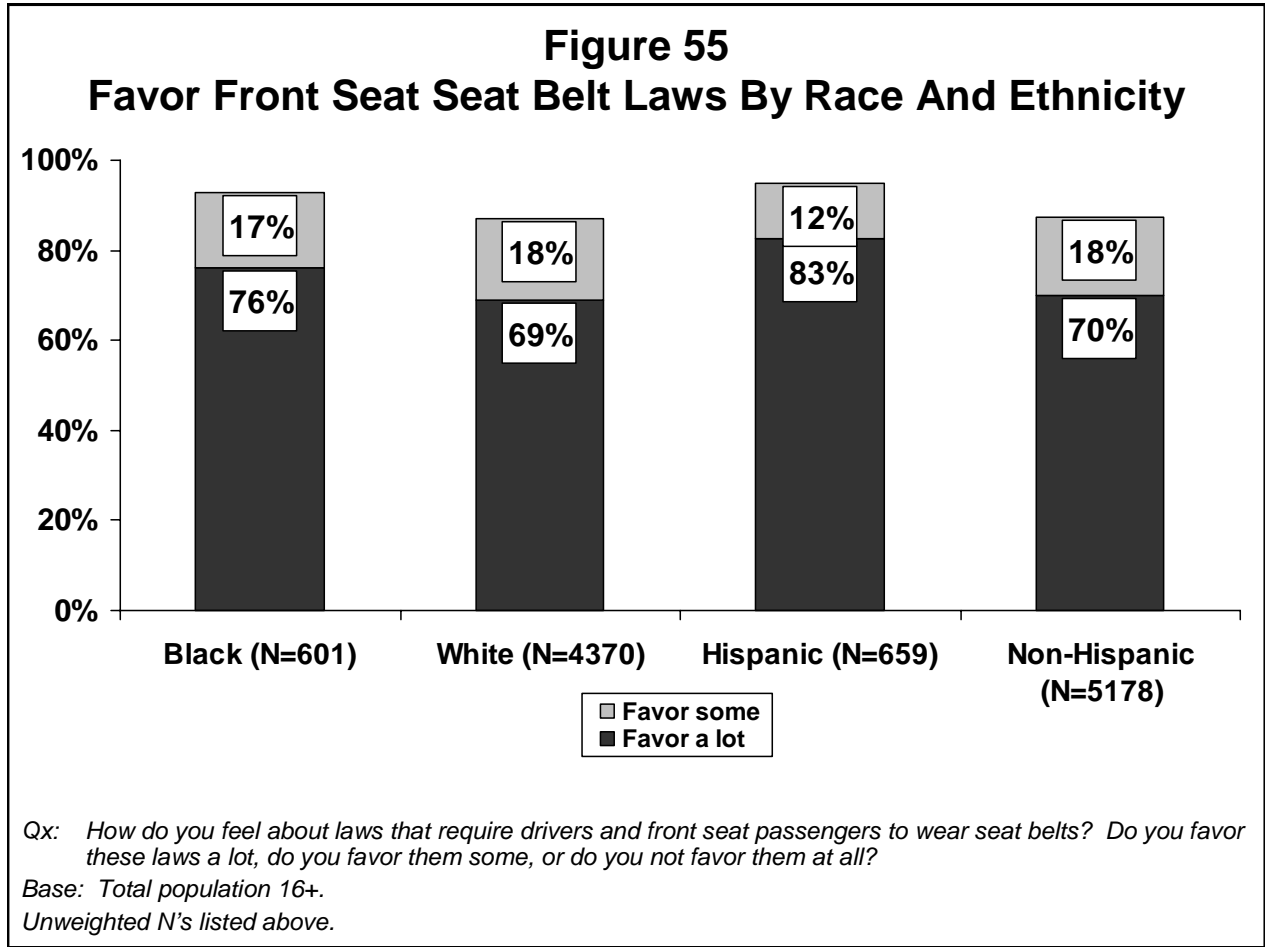
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Females (92%) voiced stronger support for front seat seat belt laws than did males (84%). There was little difference across age groups, although the oldest age group was most likely to favor front seat belt laws “a lot.”



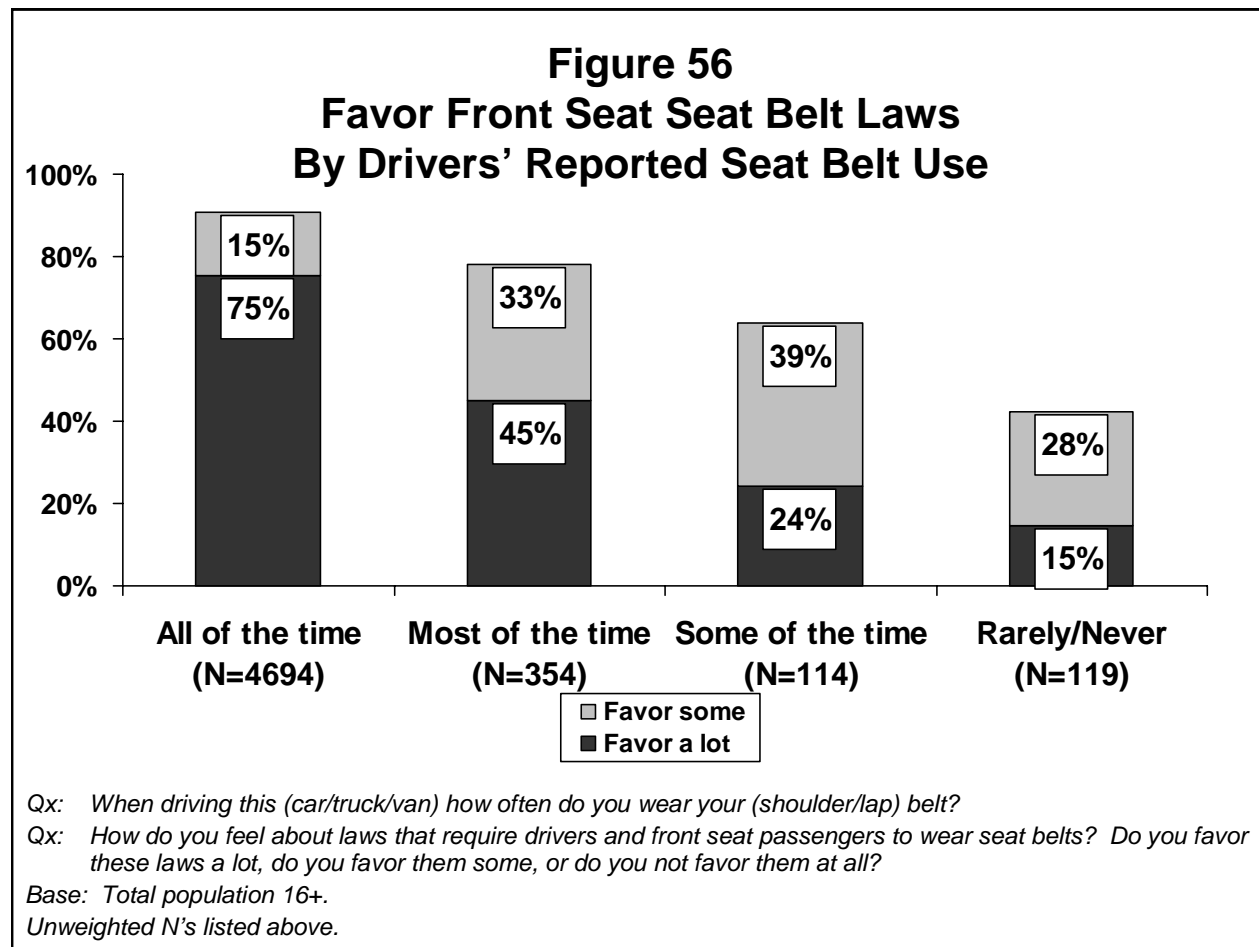
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Blacks (93%) and Hispanics (95%) were more likely to express support for front seat seat belt laws than Whites (87%) and non-Hispanics (88%). This pattern of greater support among minority groups for legislation and enforcement was repeated on other questionnaire items addressed in this Chapter.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

As expected, support for seat belt laws was strongest among those who used their seat belt most often. Nine-in-ten drivers (91%¹³) who said they used their seat belt “all of the time” favored front seat seat belt laws “a lot” or “some.” The figure dropped to 78% of “most of the time” seat belt users, and 64% of “some of the time” users. Among drivers who rarely or never wore seat belts, 42% said they favored laws requiring seat belt use by drivers and front seat passengers.

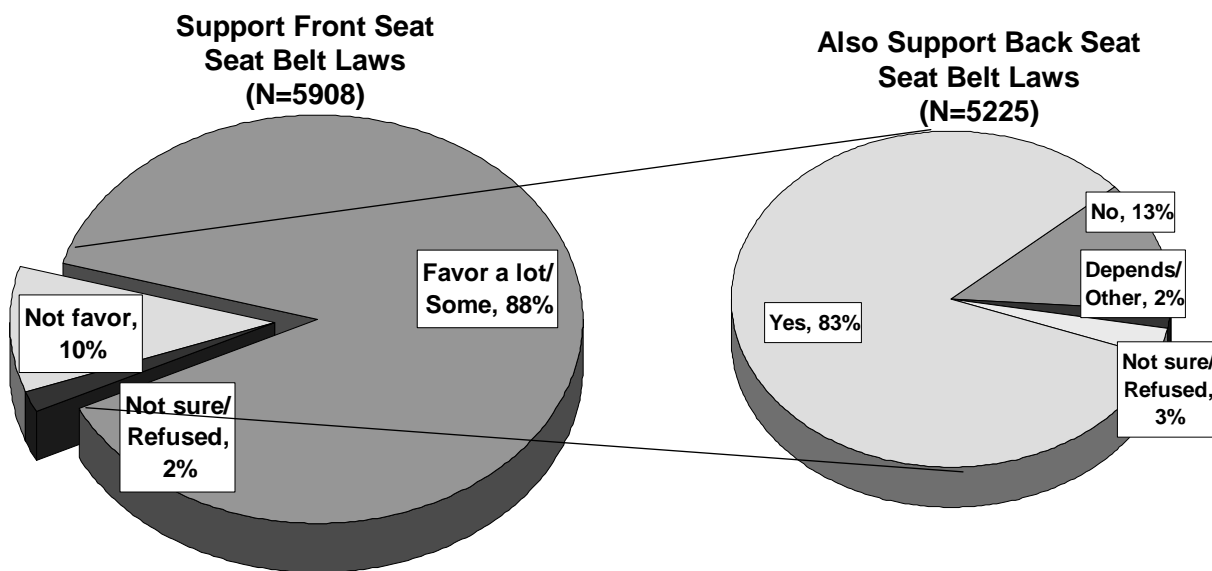


¹³ Numbers in this paragraph do not all equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

If respondents said that they favored front seat seat belt laws (either somewhat or a lot), the interviewers then asked them if they also supported laws that applied to the back seat as well. More than four-fifths (83%) said yes. This equates to nearly three-fourths (73%) of the total population age 16 and older supporting seat belt laws that apply to both the front and back seats (83% of the 88% who favored front seat laws).

Figure 57
Support For Seat Belt Laws That Apply To Back Seat Adult Passengers



Qx: How do you feel about laws that require drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts? Do you favor these laws a lot, do you favor them some, or do you not favor these laws at all?

Qx: Do you think that seat belt laws should also apply to back seat adult passengers?

Base: Pie 1: Total population age 16+.

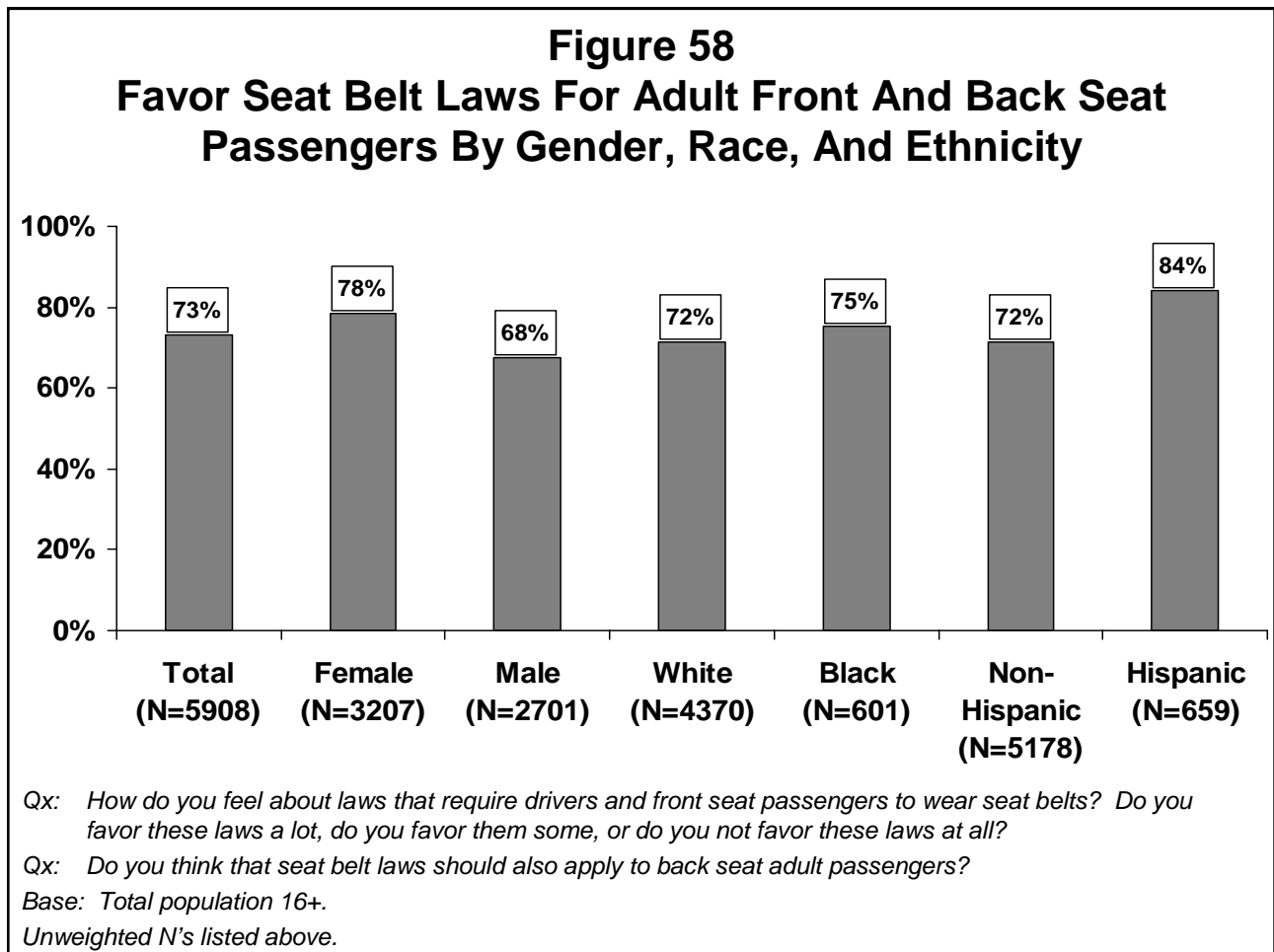
Pie 2: Those who favor front seat belt laws.

Unweighted N's listed above.

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

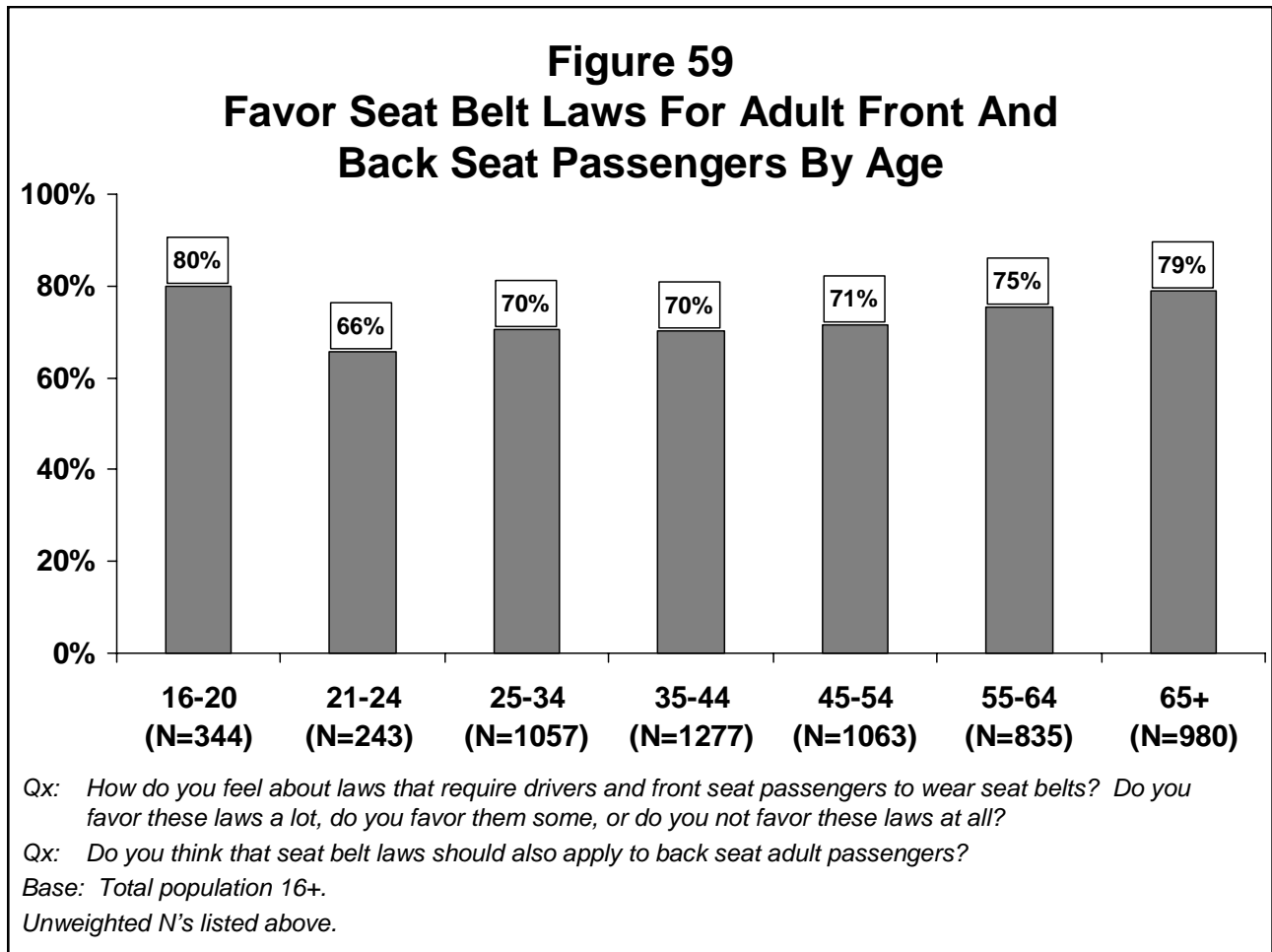
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

As noted on the previous page, 73% of persons believed that seat belt laws should apply to vehicle occupants in both the front and back seats. The percentage was higher among females (78%) than males (68%), and higher among Hispanics (84%) than non-Hispanics (72%).



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

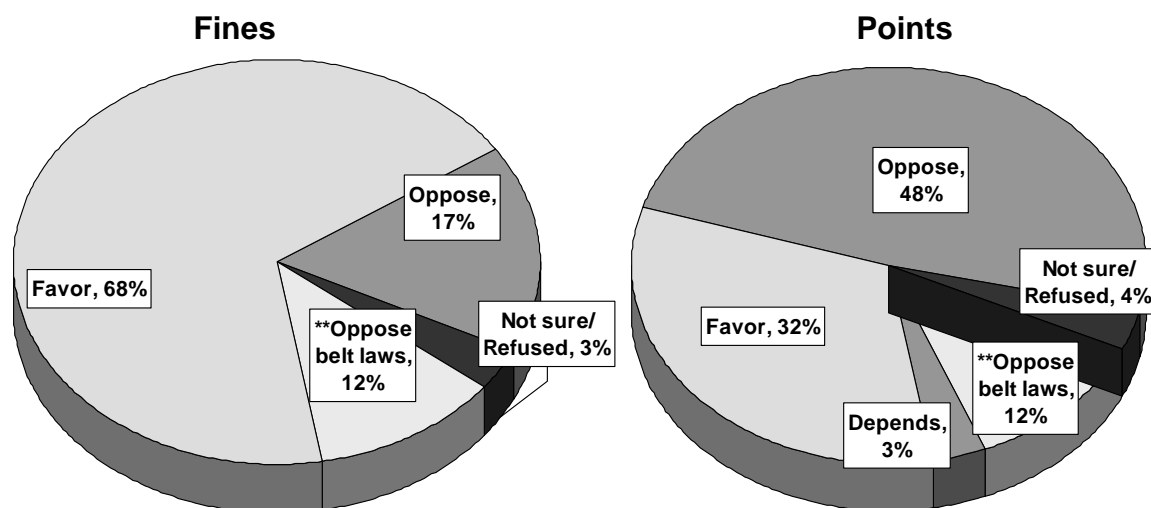
The least support across age groups for both front and back seat laws was recorded for persons ages 21 through 24 (66%).



Attitudes Toward Enforcement Of Seat Belt Laws

The public tended to favor enforcing seat belt laws with fines, but not with points on the driver’s license. About two-thirds (68%) of the population age 16 and older supported fines for drivers who did not wear seat belts. Less than half that many (32%) supported points against the license as a penalty; another 3% said it depended on past violations. As indicated on page 110, 12% of the population opposed front seat seat belt laws entirely or did not know if they did (they did not receive the fines/points questions and therefore are separated from those who did).

Figure 60
Support For Fines And Points



** Includes 2% not sure/refused on support for front seat seat belt laws.

Qx: How do you feel about laws that require drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts? Do you favor these laws a lot, do you favor them some, or do you not favor these laws at all?

Qx: Do you favor or oppose fines for drivers who do not wear seat belts?

Qx: Do you favor or oppose receiving points against a license as a penalty for seat belt violations?

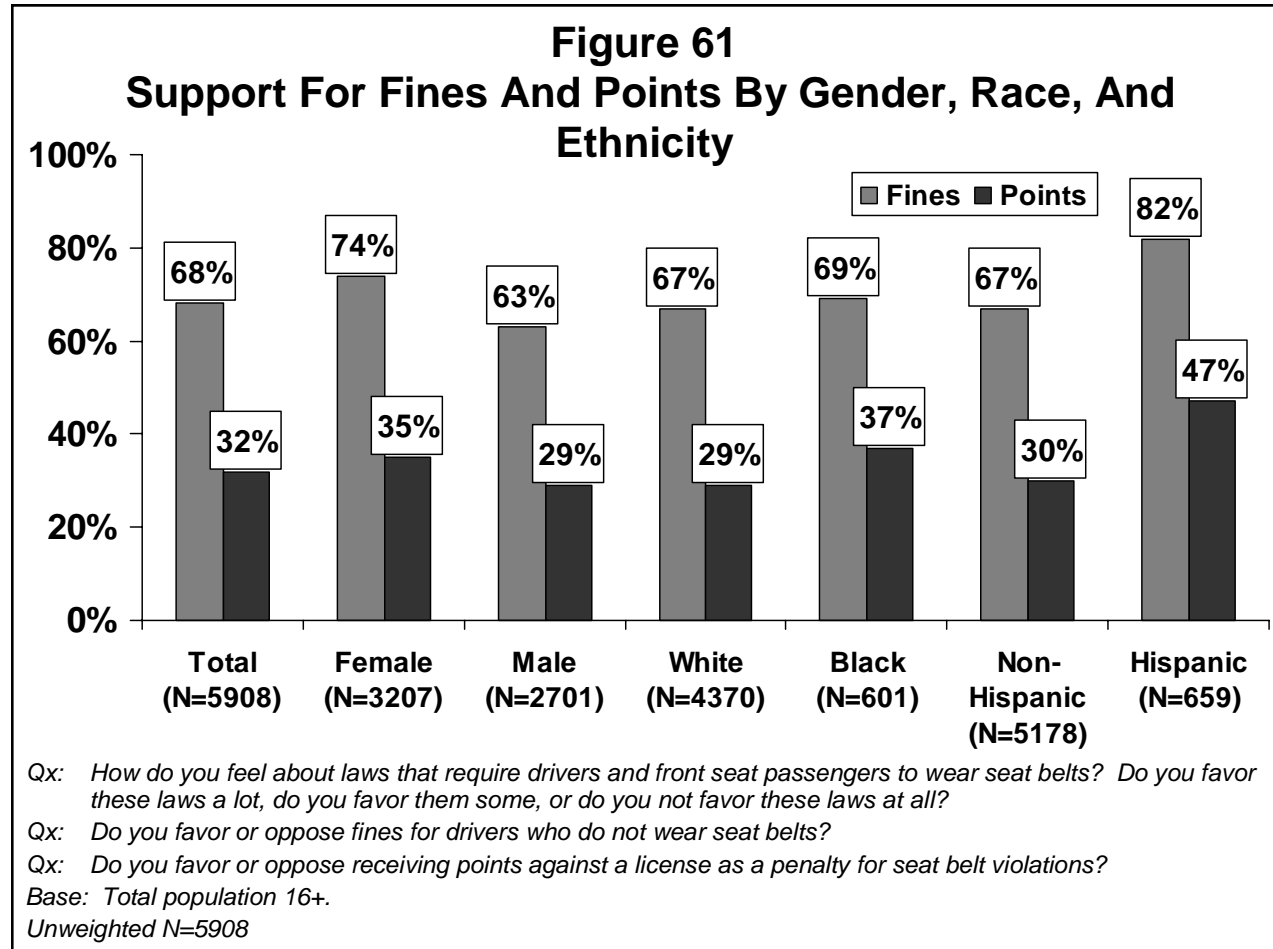
Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

*The percentages in the pies do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

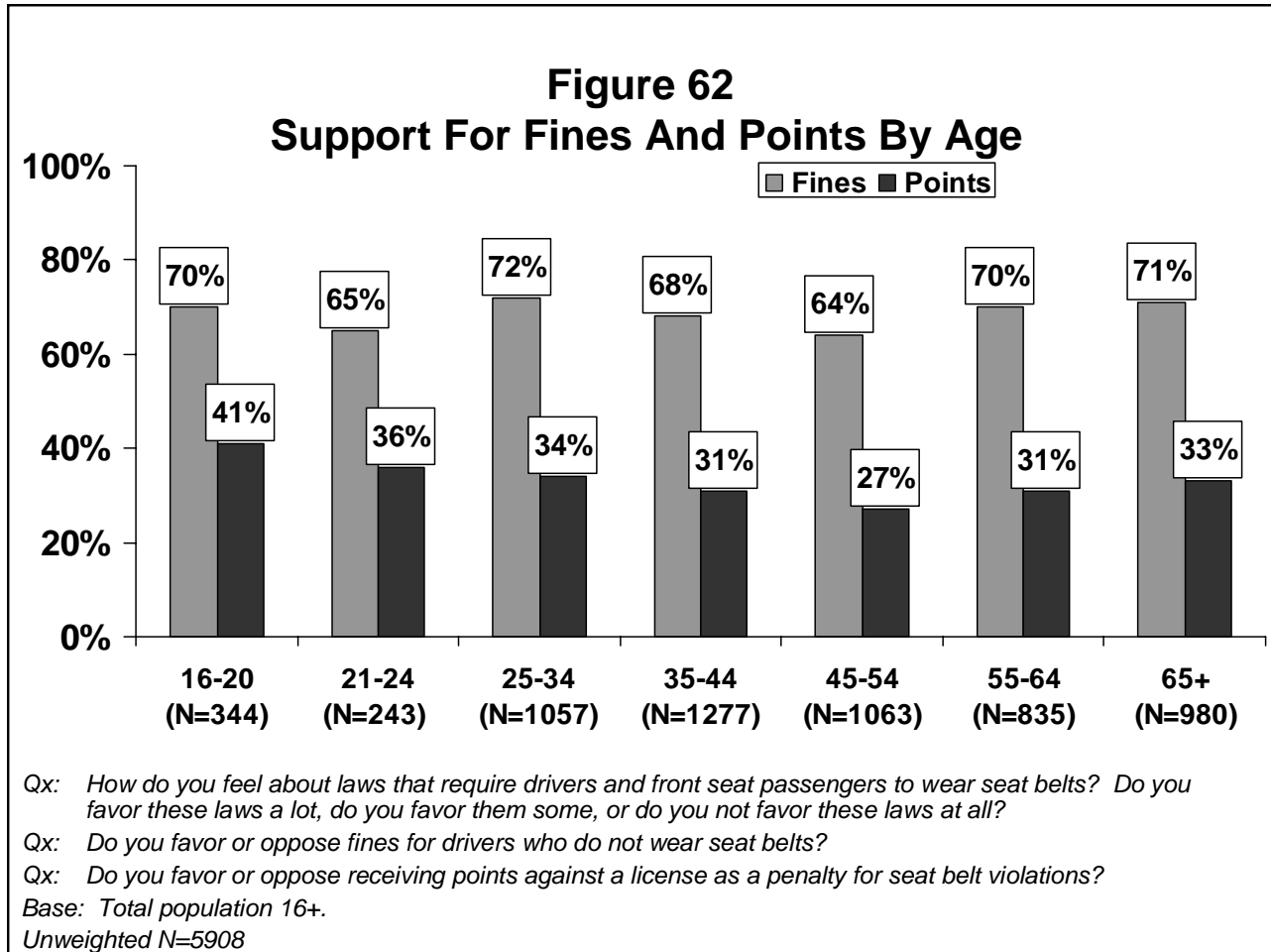
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Females were more likely to support fines and points against a license for seat belt violations than males (fines: 74% to 63%, points: 35% to 29%). Blacks and Whites were almost equal in their support for fines (69% to 67%) but different on their support for points (37% to 29%). Hispanics were much more likely to support both fines (82% to 67%) and points (47% to 30%) for seat belt violations than non-Hispanics.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

No clear pattern emerged in support for fines for seat belt violations by age. However, younger persons (under 25) were more likely to support points than older persons.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Support for points was highest among those who had not graduated high school (43%) and those with incomes under \$30,000. Respondents who drove a van/minivan (37%) were more likely to support points than drivers of other vehicles.

Table 37
Support For Fines And Points
By Demographic Characteristics

Qx: *Do you favor or oppose fines for drivers who do not wear seat belts?*

Qx: *Do you favor or oppose receiving points against a license as a penalty for seat belt violations?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

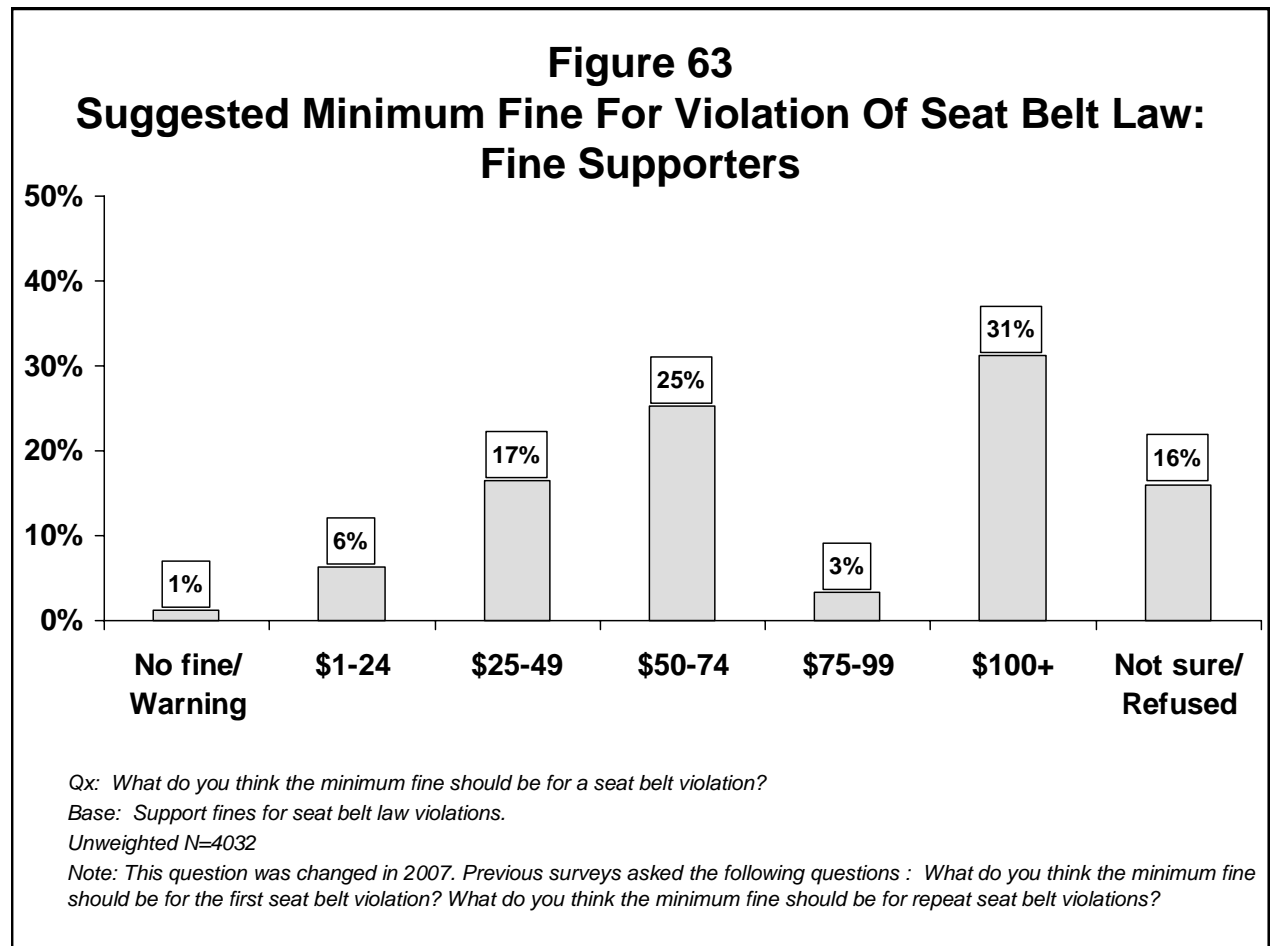
	Unweighted N	*Fines			*Points		
		Favor	Oppose	**Oppose belt laws	Favor	Oppose	**Oppose belt laws
Total	(5908)	68%	17%	12%	32%	48%	12%
Education							
11 or less	(647)	72%	16%	9%	43%	36%	9%
HS grad/GED	(1660)	65%	18%	13%	30%	50%	13%
Some college	(1423)	68%	15%	13%	29%	51%	13%
College grad	(2111)	70%	17%	10%	32%	50%	10%
Income							
<\$15,000	(546)	67%	20%	11%	39%	41%	11%
\$15,000-29,999	(785)	71%	16%	9%	38%	46%	9%
\$30,000-49,999	(1110)	68%	16%	13%	29%	52%	13%
\$50,000-74,999	(1027)	68%	18%	11%	30%	53%	11%
\$75,000-99,999	(683)	69%	17%	11%	32%	51%	11%
\$100,000+	(879)	70%	14%	13%	34%	46%	13%
Vehicle type							
Car	(2909)	71%	16%	9%	31%	52%	9%
Van/Minivan	(521)	70%	16%	12%	37%	45%	12%
Pickup truck	(873)	58%	19%	21%	26%	46%	21%
SUV	(912)	68%	17%	11%	32%	50%	11%

**The three response categories (favor/oppose/oppose belt laws) do not sum to 100% because persons who answered DK/Refused or Depends to the questions on fines or points are not shown in the table.*

***Includes those who did not know, or refused to say, if they supported front seat seat belt laws (they were not asked the questions on fines or points). This was about 1 or 2 percentage points for almost all groups.*

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

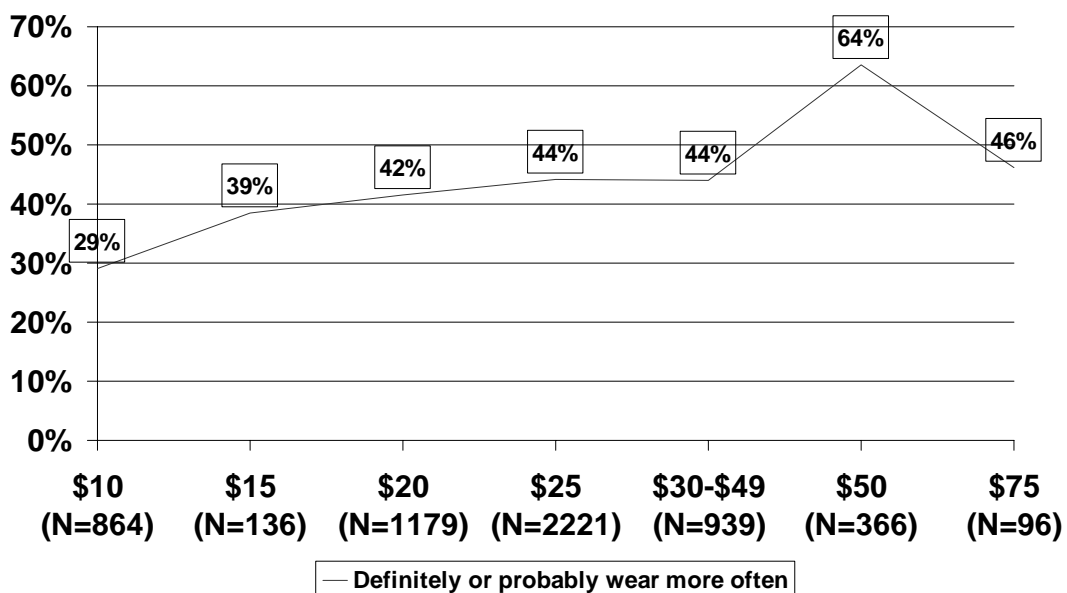
Interviewers asked those who supported fines as a sanction what they thought should be the minimum fine for a seat belt violation. Almost one-quarter (24%) supported fines under \$50 (or no fine at all). Another 24% favored exactly \$50 while 31% supported fines of \$100 or more.



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The survey sought to determine whether the public believed that existing fine amounts can affect behavior. Respondents were asked if someone they knew who didn't use seat belts all of the time would wear them more often if assessed the amount of the fine in their State (in the one State not having a belt law applicable to adults an amount of \$25 was used; in States where the fine amount was within a designated range a midpoint or \$50 was used, whichever was lower). Figure 64 shows that the lowest fine amount corresponded with the lowest expectation for behavior change. A fine of \$50 was associated with the highest expectation for behavior change.

Figure 64
Someone They Know Would Probably Or Definitely Wear Seat Belts More Often If Assessed The State Fine



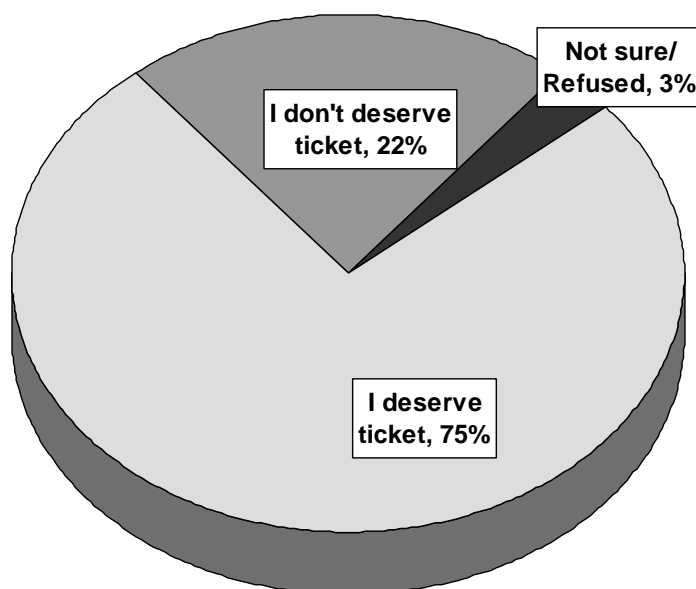
Qx: I'd like you to think about someone you know who doesn't wear seat belts all of the time. If that person were stopped and fined (amount of fine in state) for not wearing seat belts, would this person definitely wear seat belts more often, probably wear seat belts more often, or probably not change his or her seat belt wearing habits?

Base: Total population 16+.
 Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Respondents were asked how they would likely react to getting a ticket for a seat belt violation. The interviewers gave respondents two choices and asked which was more likely; that they would believe they deserved the ticket because they broke the law, or they would believe the ticket was undeserved because wearing a seat belt should be a personal choice. This question was designed to enable comparison of the public's views about seat belt laws from the societal perspective (support for belt laws in principle) and the personal perspective (reaction to personally receiving some punishment for violating the laws). According to the data, 75% would be more likely to believe that they deserved the ticket.

Figure 65
Likely Reaction To Receiving Ticket For Seat Belt Violation



Qx: Suppose you get a ticket for not wearing your seat belt. Which of the following statements better describes your likely reaction? I deserve the ticket because I broke the law, or I do NOT deserve the ticket because wearing a seat belt should be a personal choice.

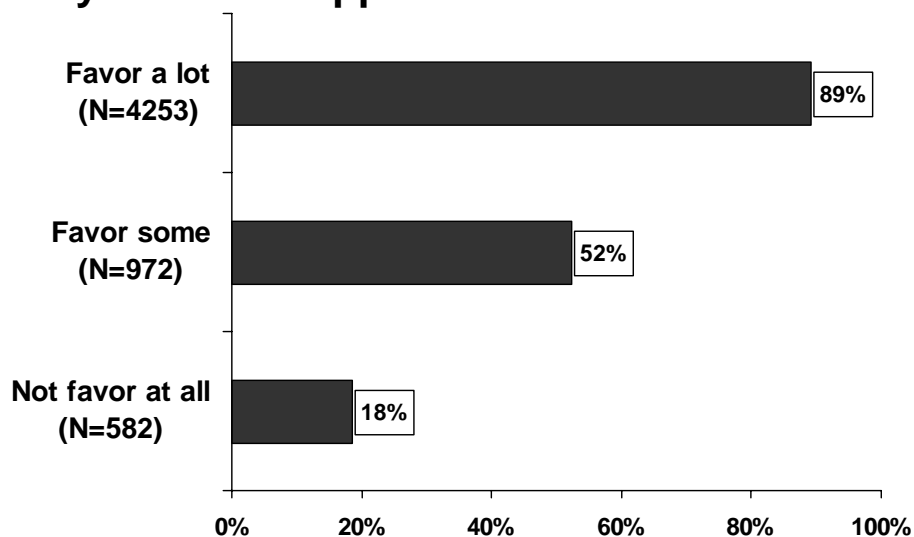
Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The survey found attitudes toward seat belt laws in general, and attitudes about the fairness of personally receiving a ticket for a seat belt violation, to be somewhat consistent with one another although not entirely so. Almost nine-in-ten persons (89%) who said they favored front seat seat belt laws “a lot” also said they would deserve the ticket for breaking the law. This figure dropped to 52% for those who favored the laws “some”. Still, 8% who favored the laws “a lot” responded that they would not deserve the ticket because it should be a personal choice (about 3% “did not know” their likely reaction or did not answer). Conversely, 18% of those who did not favor the laws at all said they would deserve the ticket.

Figure 66
Deserve Seat Belt Ticket
By Favor Or Oppose Front Seat Seat Belt Laws



Qx: How do you feel about laws that require drivers and front seat passengers to wear seat belts? Do you favor these laws a lot, do you favor them some, or do you not favor them at all?

Qx: Suppose you get a ticket for not wearing your seat belt. Which of the following statements better describes your likely reaction? I deserve the ticket because I broke the law, or I do NOT deserve the ticket because wearing a seat belt should be a personal choice.

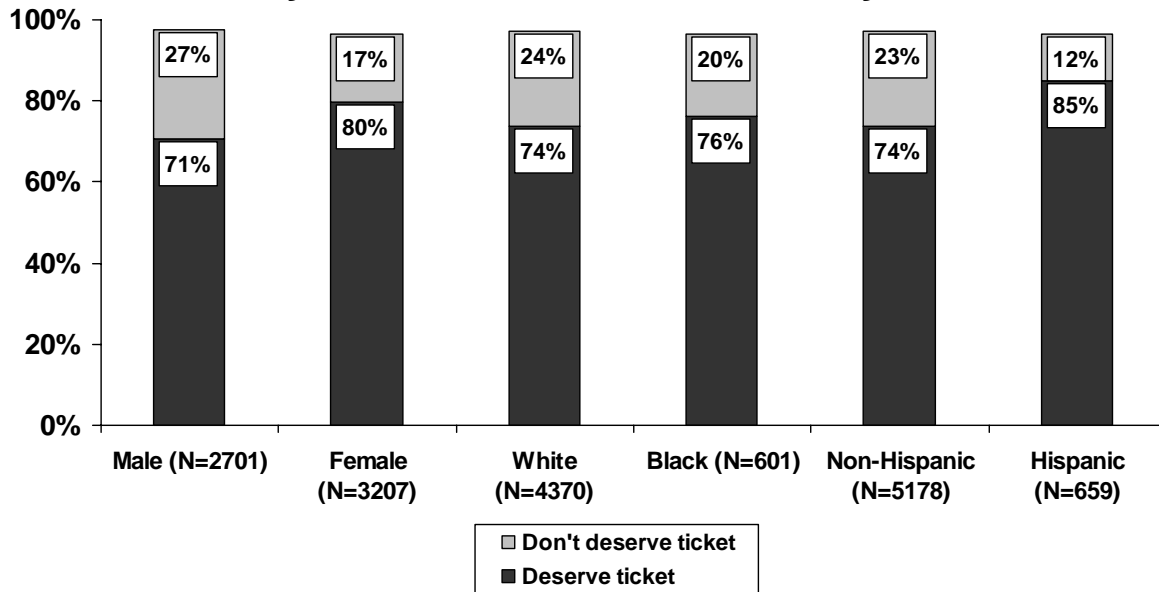
Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Females (80%) were more likely than males (71%) to believe that their probable reaction would be that they deserved the ticket. More than one quarter of males (27%) instead chose the argument that they did not deserve the ticket because it should be a personal choice. In addition, Hispanics (85%) were more likely than non-Hispanics (74%) to answer that they likely would feel that they deserved the ticket.

Figure 67
Likely Reaction To Receiving Seat Belt Ticket
By Gender, Race, And Ethnicity



Qx: Suppose you get a ticket for not wearing your seat belt. Which of the following statements better describes your likely reaction? I deserve the ticket because I broke the law, or I do NOT deserve the ticket because wearing a seat belt should be a personal choice.

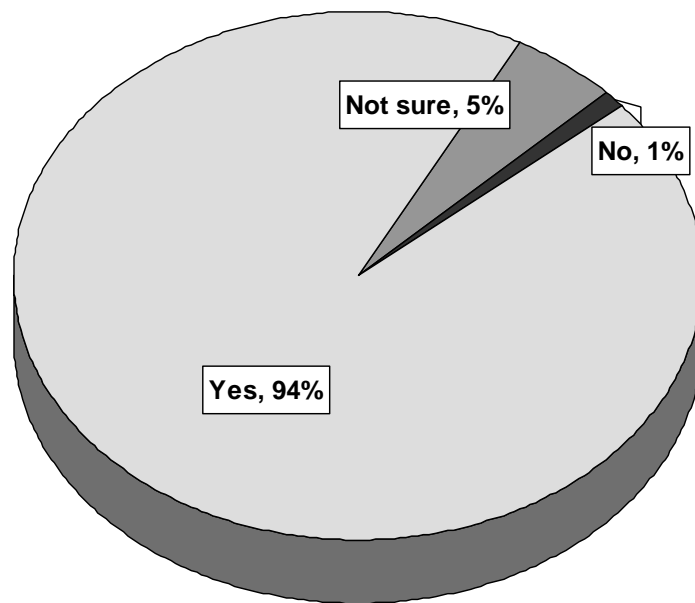
Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

Knowledge Of State Seat Belt Laws

Interviewers asked respondents whether or not their State had a seat belt law, and then asked questions about the law's coverage and enforcement guidelines. Most people (94%) believed their State did indeed have a seat belt law. Those that didn't were usually uncertain about the existence of a State law.

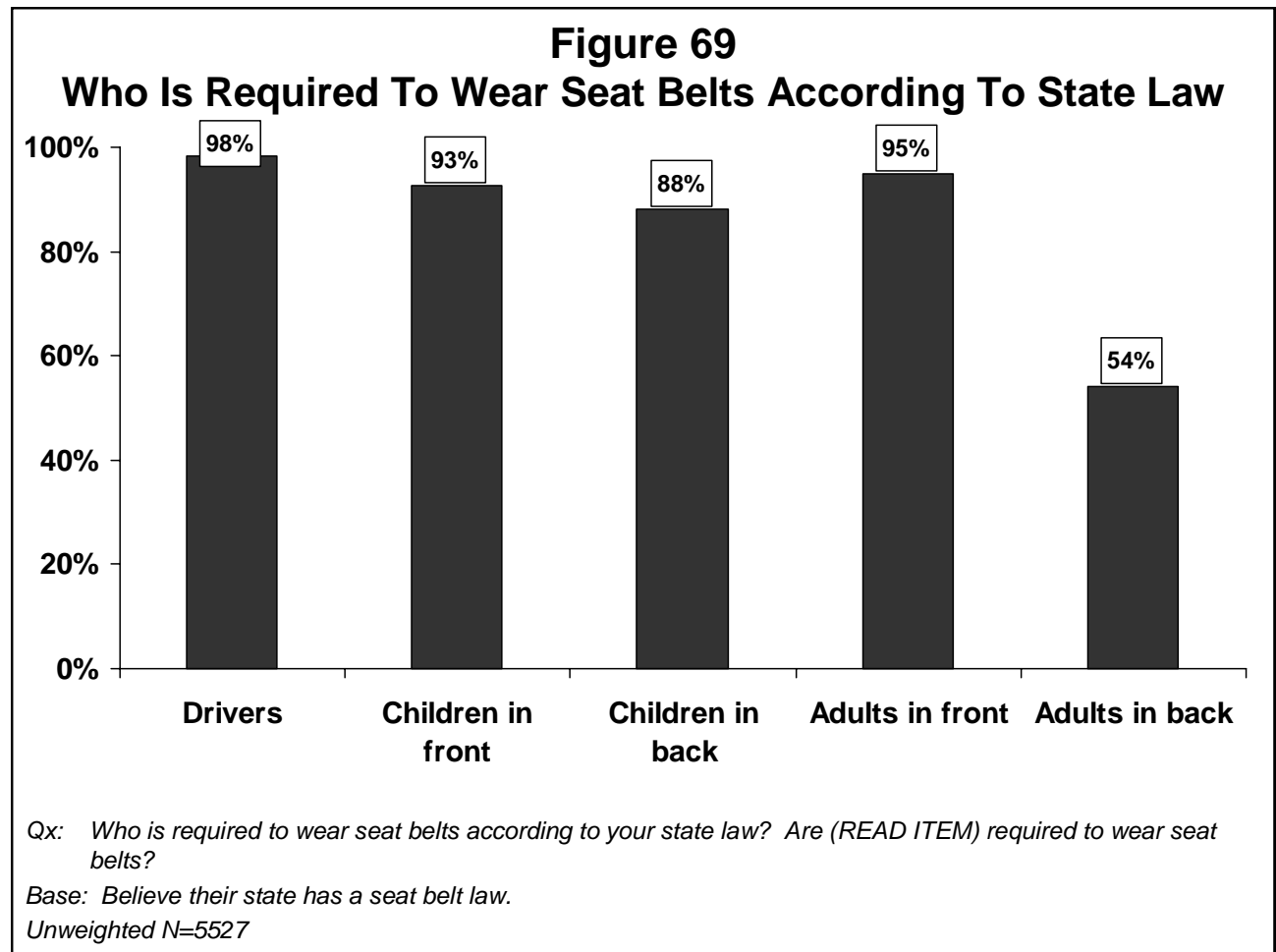
Figure 68
Believe Their State Has A Law Requiring Seat Belt Use



Qx: Does (STATE) have a law requiring seat belt use?
Base: Total population 16+.
Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

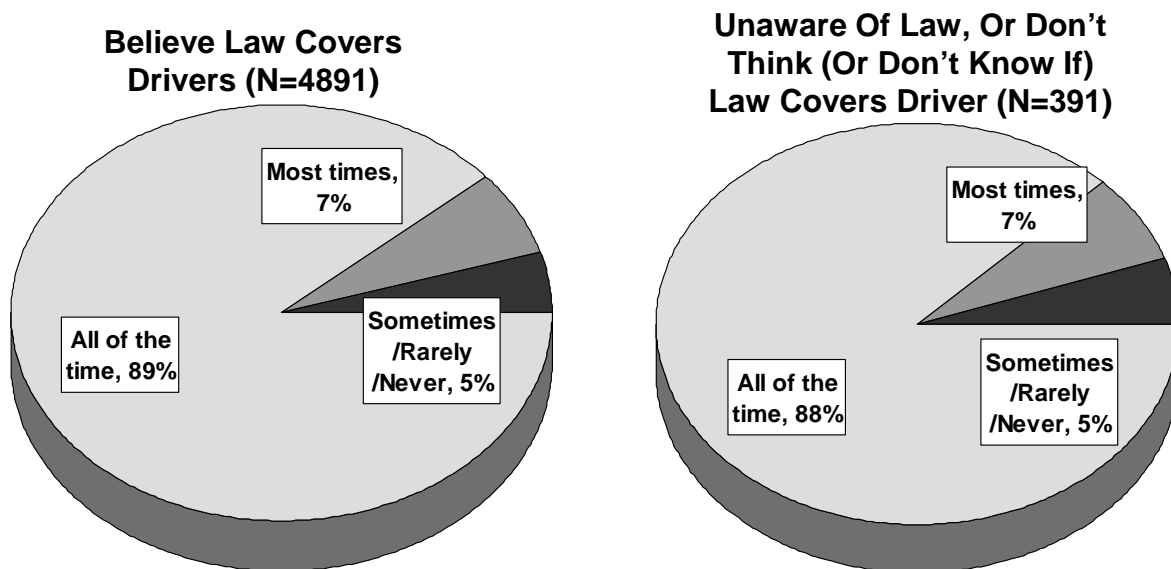
Those persons who believed their State had a law requiring seat belt use were asked who the law covered. The interviewers asked the respondents if each of the following groups was required to wear seat belts: drivers, children in the front seat, children in the back seat, adult passengers in the front seat, and adult passengers in the back seat. Almost everyone believed the law covered drivers (98%), children in the front (93%), and adult passengers in the front (95%). Many thought the law also covered children in the back (88%). Over half (54%) assumed that adults were required to wear seat belts in the back seat.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The next three pages show self-reported belt use for a specific seating position for persons who believed there was a law requiring usage in that seating position. For purposes of comparison, these pages also present self-reported belt use for persons who did not know there was a law, or did not believe that seating position was covered by the law, or were unsure if that seating position was covered by the law. Among drivers who thought there was a law requiring drivers to wear seat belts, 89% said they used their seat belt “all of the time” while driving. If they did not say that drivers were covered by a law, 88% said they wore seat belts “all of the time” while driving.

**Figure 70
Driver Reported Seat Belt Use
By Whether Driver Believes Law Covers Drivers**



Qx: Who is required to wear seat belts according to your state law? Are (Drivers) required to wear seat belts?

Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

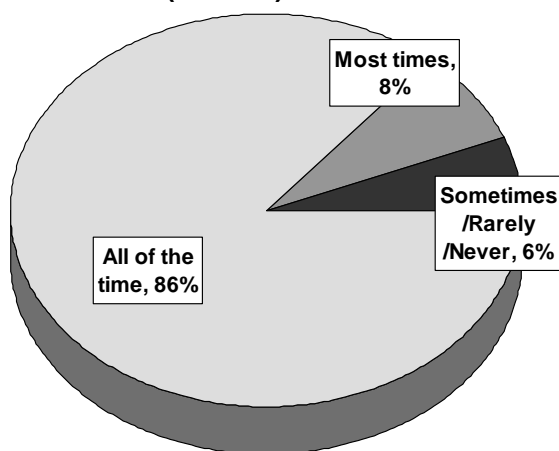
Unweighted N's listed above.

*The percentages in the pies do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

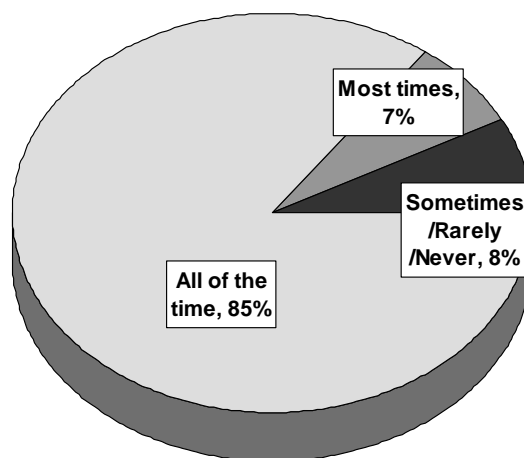
Eighty-six percent of those who said there was a seat belt law that covered adult front seat passengers also reported that they always wore their seat belt when sitting as passengers in the front seat. This compared to 85% of those who were unaware of a law, or did not say it covered front seat adult passengers.

Figure 71
Adults' Reported Front Passenger Seat Belt Use
By Whether Believe Law Covers That Position

**Believe Law Covers
 Adult Front Seat
 Passengers (FSPs)
 (N=4760)**



**Unaware of Law, Or Don't Think
 (Or Don't Know If) Law Covers
 FSPs (N=616)**



Qx: Who is required to wear seat belts according to your state law? Are (adult passengers in the front seat) required to wear seat belts?

Qx: When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt?

Base: Persons who at least on occasion ride as passengers.

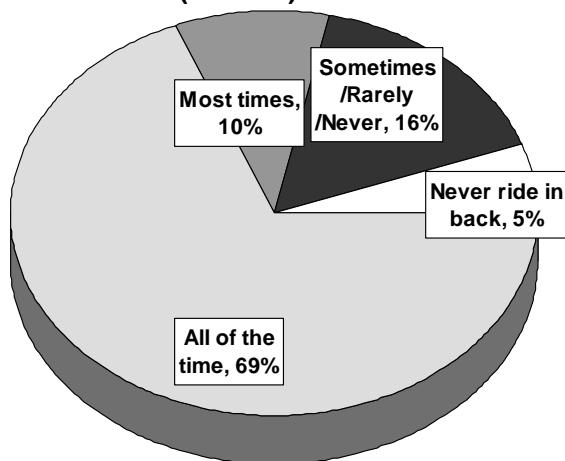
Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

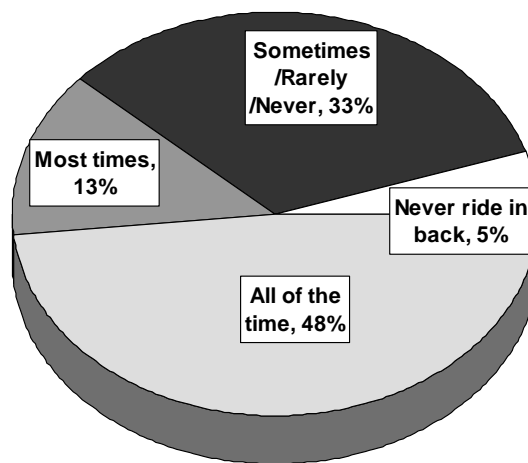
The law appeared to make the greatest difference for seat belt use in the rear seating position. Among those who thought there was a law that covered the back seat, 69% said they used their seat belt “all of the time” when riding in the back. Only 48% of those who did not think or did not know if there was a law said that they wore their seat belt “all of the time” while riding in the back seat.

Figure 72
Adults’ Reported Back Passenger Seat Belt Use
By Whether Believe Law Covers That Position

Believe Law Covers
Adult Back Seat
Passengers (BSPs)
(N=2620)



Unaware of Law, Or Don’t Think
(Or Don’t Know If) Law Covers*
BSPs (N=2756)



Qx: Who is required to wear seat belts according to your state law? Are (adult passengers in the back seat) required to wear seat belts?

Qx: When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?

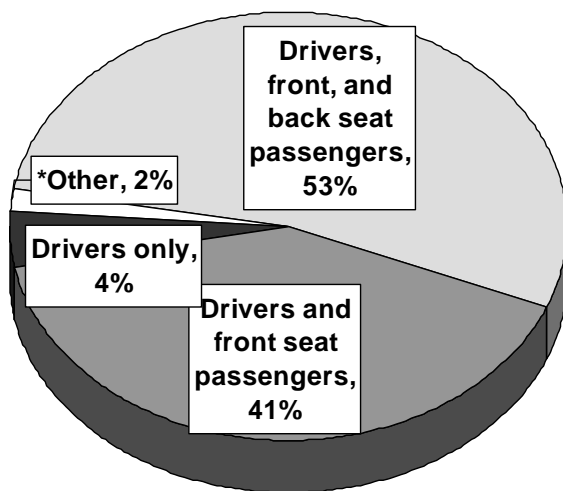
Base: Persons who at least on occasion ride as passengers.

Unweighted N’s listed above.

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

Figure 73 segments those persons who thought there was a State law into groups based on the extent they believed that the law covered adults. Fifty-three percent believed that the law applied to all adults in the vehicle (drivers, passengers in the front, and passengers in the back). More than four-in-ten (41%) thought that the law applied to only drivers and front seat passengers. Four percent said that the law applied to drivers only. The remainder of the respondents (2%) either provided a different permutation from the combinations possible, or else indicated that they did not know who the law covered.

Figure 73
Beliefs About Which Adults Are Required To Wear Seat Belts



Qx: Who is required to wear seat belts according to your state law? Are (READ ITEM) required to wear seat belts?

Base: Believe their state has a seat belt law.

Unweighted N=5527

* Other includes Don't know/Refused and other combinations not shown in the pie.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The greater the coverage of the law, the more likely that persons correctly identified who in the vehicle was required to wear seat belts. In States where all seating positions were covered, 79% of the respondents correctly agreed that drivers, adult front seat passengers, and adult back seat passengers were required to wear seat belts. If the State law only covered the front seating positions, then fewer (49%) correctly agreed that drivers and adult front seat passengers, but not adult back seat passengers, were required to wear seat belts. Another 44% in these States believed that all seating positions were covered.

Table 38
Beliefs About Who Is Required To Wear Seat Belts
By Seating Positions Covered By State Law

Qx: Who is required to wear seat belts according to your state law? Are (READ ITEM) required to wear seat belts?

Base: Believe that state has a seat belt law.

Who public believes is required to wear seat belts	What state law requires	
	Driver and all passengers to wear seat belts	Only driver and front seat passengers to wear seat belts
	(N=1430)	(N=4082)
Driver and all passengers	79%	44%
Driver only	3%	5%
Driver and front seat passengers	17%	49%
Other/Not sure/Refused	1%	2%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Pages 122-124 examined self-reported seat belt use according to beliefs about which seating positions were covered by the State law. Table 39 summarizes self-reported seat belt use according to the actual provisions of the State law. The results were similar in that the major difference occurred in the back seat. Without a law covering the back seating position, people were far less likely to report wearing their seat belt while riding in the back seat.

Table 39
Self-Reported Seat Belt Use
By Seating Positions Covered By State Law

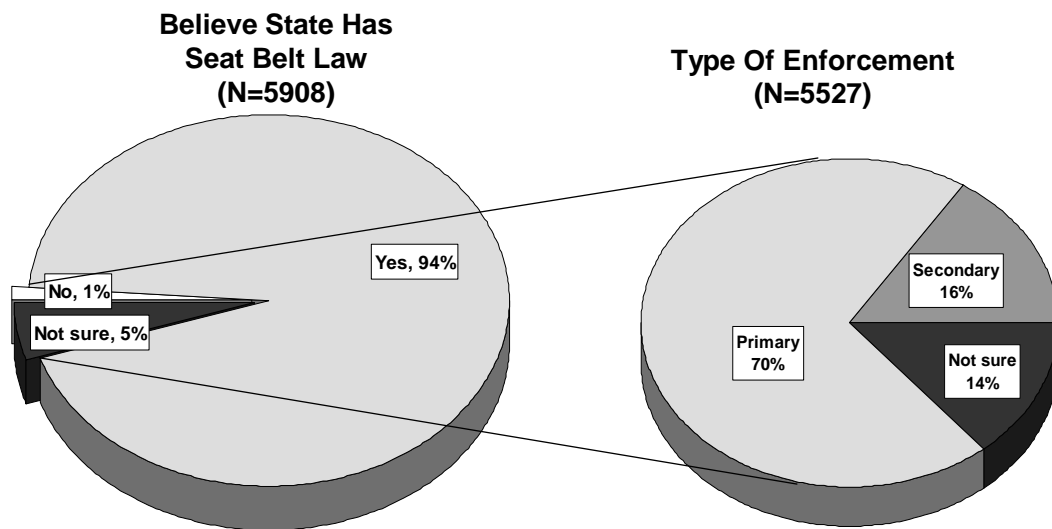
Qx: *When driving this (car/truck/van), how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?*
 Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt*
 Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*
 Base: *Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts/Persons who at least on occasion ride as passengers.*

Self-reported seat belt use for different seating positions	What state law requires	
	Driver and all passengers to wear seat belts	Only driver and front seat passengers to wear seat belts
Seat belt use as driver	(Drivers only/N=1358)	(Drivers only/N=3890)
All of the time	91%	88%
Most of the time	6%	7%
Some of the time	1%	3%
Rarely	1%	1%
Never	1%	1%
Seat belt use in front seat	(N=1376)	(N=3964)
All of the time	89%	85%
Most of the time	6%	8%
Some of the time	2%	4%
Rarely	2%	1%
Never	1%	2%
Never ride in front	*	*
Seat belt use in back seat	(N=1376)	(N=3964)
All of the time	72%	54%
Most of the time	11%	12%
Some of the time	5%	9%
Rarely	3%	7%
Never	5%	13%
Never ride in back	4%	6%

Primary Or Secondary Enforcement Provisions Of Seat Belt Laws

State seat belt laws contain primary or secondary enforcement provisions. Under primary enforcement, law enforcement officers can stop a vehicle on the basis of observing a seat belt violation. Under secondary enforcement an officer must observe some other violation first before stopping a vehicle. At the time of the survey 25 States plus the District of Columbia had primary enforcement provisions, and 24 State laws required secondary enforcement. One State had no seat belt law applicable to adults. Among persons who thought their State had a law, 70% believed it permitted primary enforcement. This equates to 66% of the total population age 16 and older (70% of the 94% who believed there was a State law).

Figure 74
Beliefs About Whether State Law Permits
Primary Or Secondary Enforcement



Qx: Does (STATE) have a law requiring seat belt use?

Qx: According to your state law, can police stop a vehicle if they observe a seat belt violation or do they have to observe some other offense first in order to stop the vehicle?

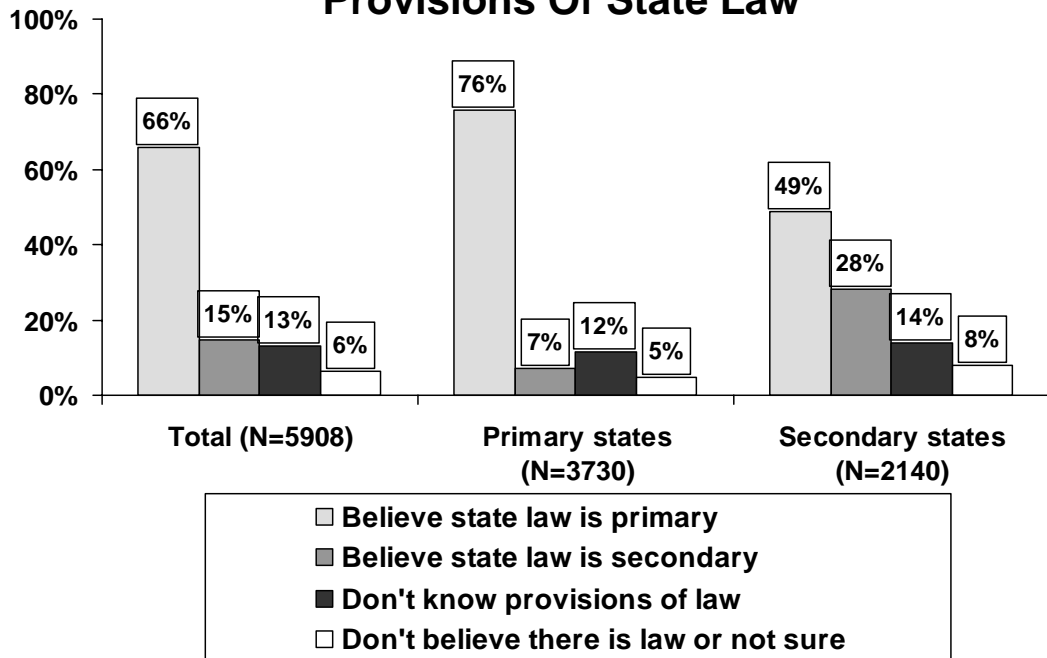
Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Among persons living in States having seat belt laws with primary enforcement provisions, over three-quarters (76%) reported that police could stop vehicles on the basis of observing seat belt violations (this figure is based on the total population; not just those who thought there was a law). In States having secondary enforcement provisions, there actually were more persons who incorrectly believed that police could stop a vehicle based on observing a seat belt violation (49%) than those who correctly knew that some other violation must be the basis for stopping the vehicle (28%).

Figure 75
Knowledge Of Primary Versus Secondary Enforcement By Provisions Of State Law



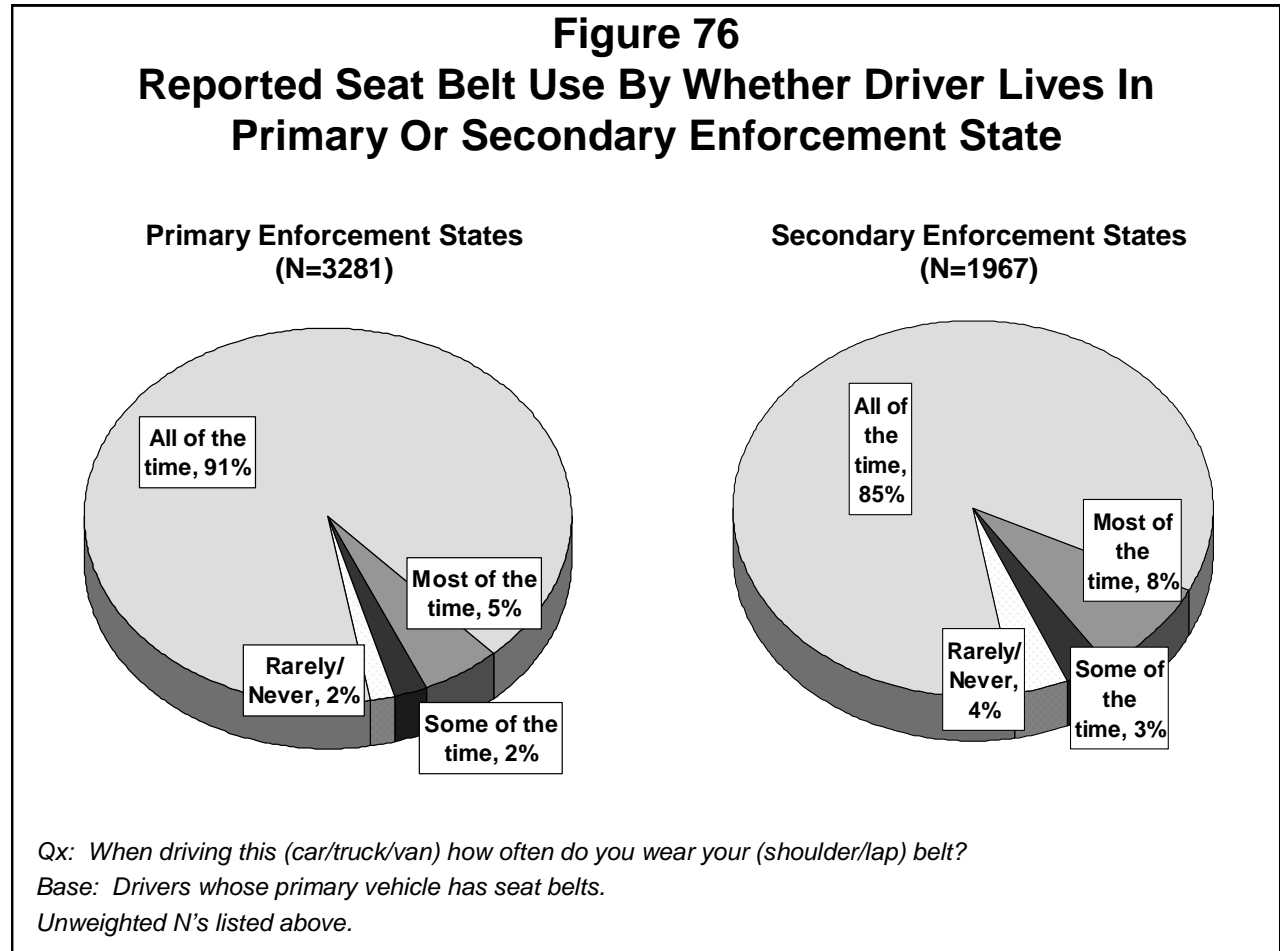
Qx: According to your state law, can police stop a vehicle if they observe a seat belt violation or do they have to observe some other offense first in order to stop the vehicle?

Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

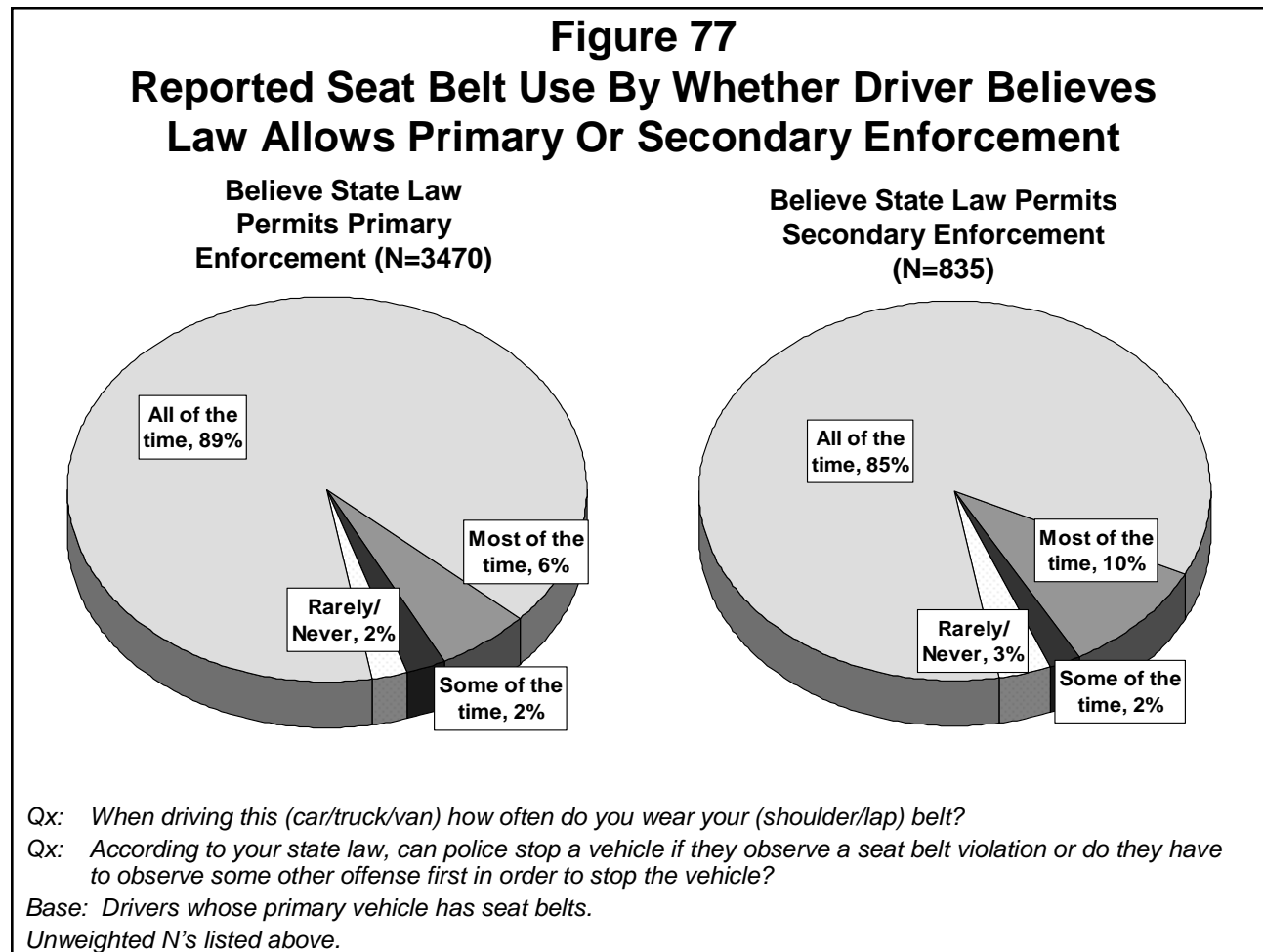
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers in States having primary enforcement provisions reported more frequent seat belt use than did those in secondary enforcement States. In States where law enforcement officers could stop motor vehicles on the basis of observing seat belt violations, 91% of drivers said that they wore their seat belt “all of the time” while driving. The comparable figure for drivers in secondary enforcement States was 85%.



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The previous page looked at differences in seat belt use based on whether the State law called for primary or secondary enforcement. Presented below is drivers' reported seat belt usage separated according to their beliefs about the provisions of the State law. The results were similar to the previous analysis. If drivers thought that their State law permitted primary enforcement, then they were more likely to answer that they wore their seat belt "all of the time" (89%) compared to drivers who did not think their State allowed this (85%).



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While reported seat belt usage was higher in primary enforcement States, there did not appear to be major differences between primary and secondary enforcement States in the perceived utility of seat belts. Table 40 compares respondents in the two groups of States on several belt utility items, as well as other attitudes. Comparison of those attitudes directly associated with enforcement are addressed later in this Chapter.

Table 40
Attitudes Concerning Utility Of Seat Belts
By Whether State Seat Belt Law Permits
Primary Or Secondary Enforcement

Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree.*

Qx: *Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt?*

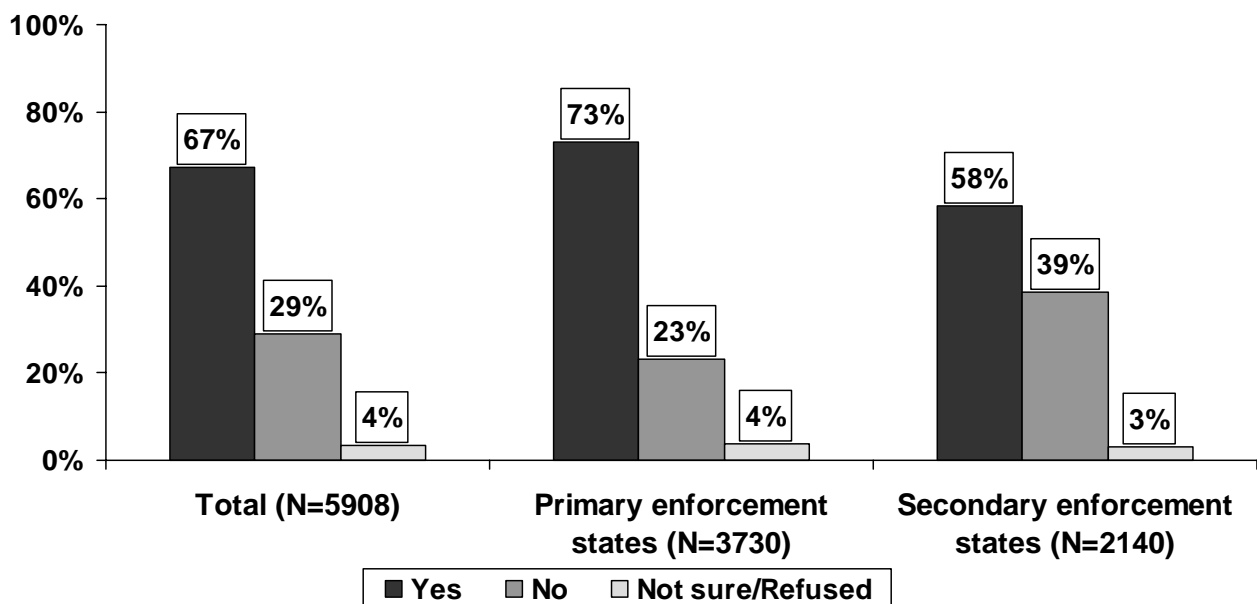
Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Provisions of state law	
	Primary	Secondary
	(N=3730)	(N=2140)
Strongly or somewhat agree with statement:		
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	36%	32%
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	17%	15%
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	95%	95%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	79%	82%
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.	22%	19%
Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations.	33%	42%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	16%	13%
Agree with statement:		
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	26%	26%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Besides exploring respondents' awareness of the enforcement provisions of their State law, the survey collected data on whether or not respondents supported primary enforcement. More than six-in-ten (67%) agreed that police should be allowed to stop a vehicle if they observed a seat belt violation when no other traffic laws were being broken. The figure was higher (73%) in States currently permitting primary enforcement of seat belt laws. Yet even in States with secondary enforcement provisions, more than half of the public (58%) supported primary enforcement.

Figure 78
Support For Primary Enforcement
By Whether State Allows It



Qx: In your opinion, should police be allowed to stop a vehicle if they observe a seat belt violation when no other traffic laws are being broken?

Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Support for primary enforcement provisions was greater among females (71%) than males (63%), and greater among Hispanics (78%) than non-Hispanics (66%).

Table 41
Support For Primary Enforcement
By Gender, Age, Race, And Ethnicity

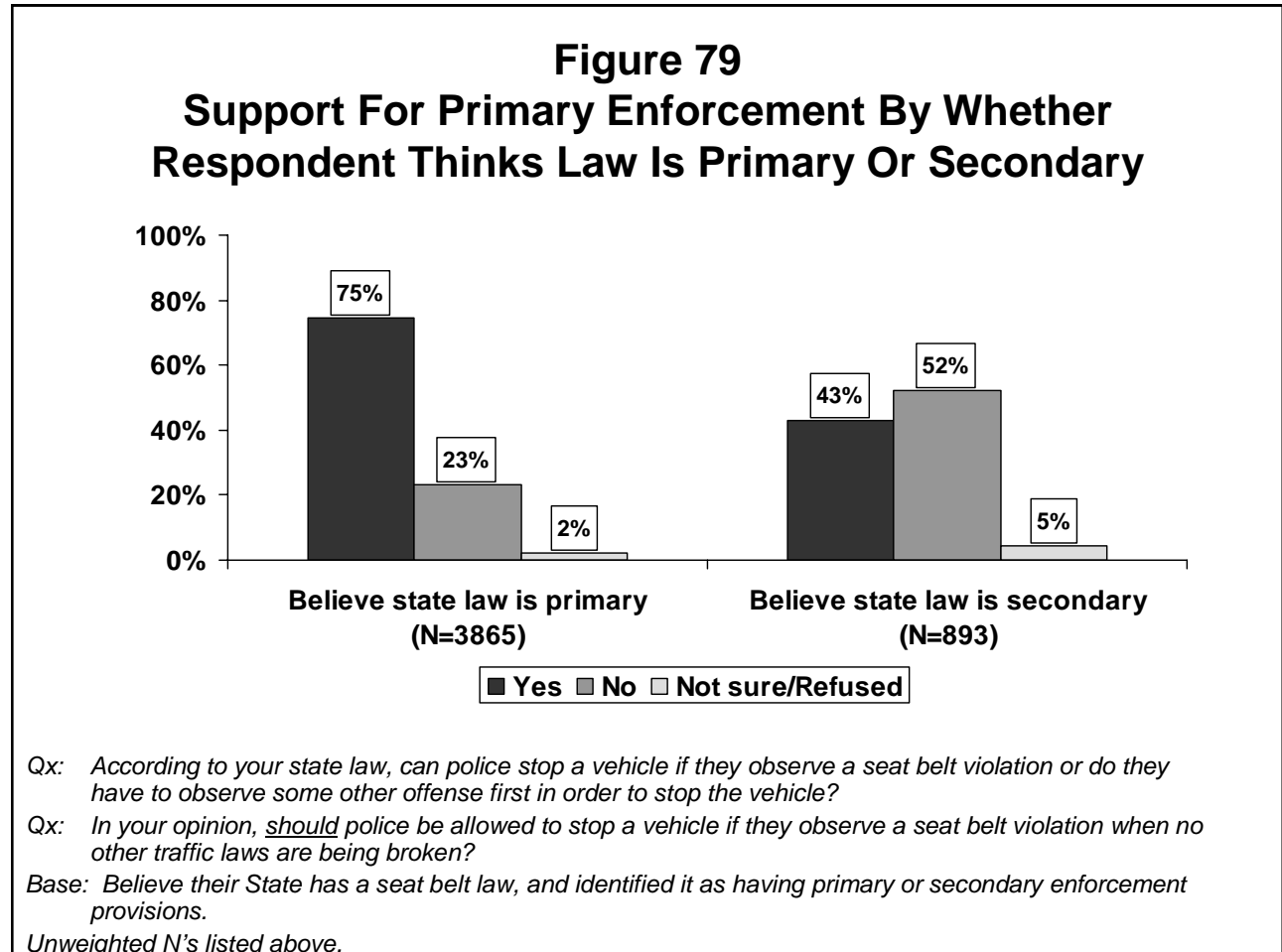
Qx: *In your opinion, should police be allowed to stop a vehicle if they observe a seat belt violation when no other traffic laws are being broken?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Unweighted N	Yes	No	Not sure/ Refused
Total	(5908)	67%	29%	4%
Gender				
Female	(3207)	71%	24%	4%
Male	(2701)	63%	35%	3%
Age				
16-20	(344)	68%	31%	1%
21-24	(243)	63%	34%	3%
25-34	(1057)	66%	30%	4%
35-44	(1277)	67%	30%	3%
45-54	(1063)	64%	34%	3%
55-64	(835)	72%	25%	3%
65+	(980)	73%	21%	6%
Race				
Black	(601)	69%	27%	4%
White	(4370)	66%	31%	3%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	(659)	78%	17%	6%
Non-Hispanic	(5178)	66%	31%	3%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

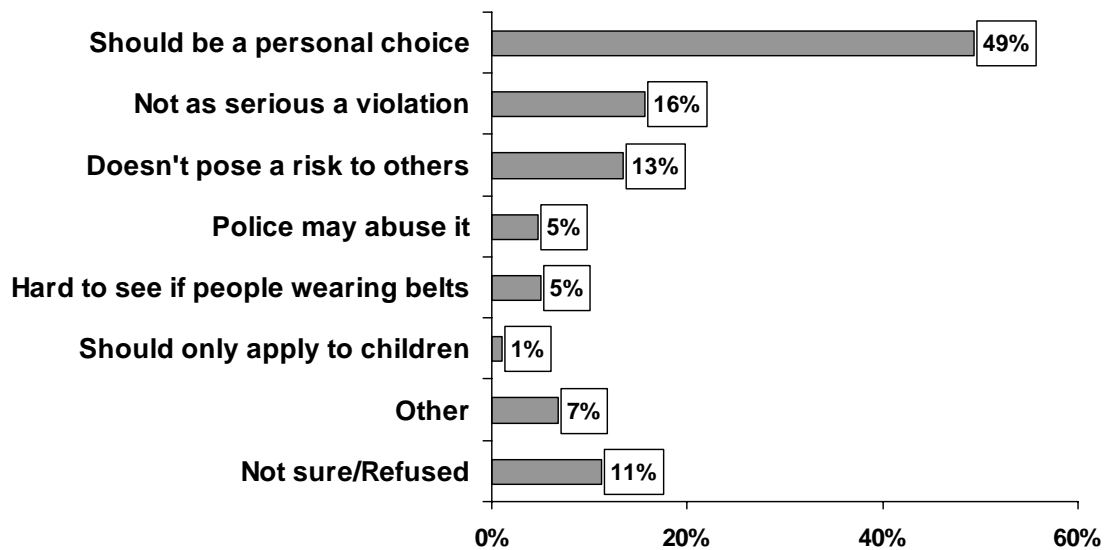
In general, people’s beliefs and attitudes about enforcement provisions tended to agree. Among persons who believed their State seat belt law permitted primary enforcement, 75% agreed that police should be able to stop the vehicle if they observe a seat belt violation but no other infraction. But if they believed their State law only allowed secondary enforcement, then the majority (52%) supported secondary enforcement provisions.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

If a respondent said that police should not be allowed to stop a vehicle based on observing a seat belt violation, the interviewer stated that “Most other traffic laws allow police to stop the vehicle whenever they see a violation,” and then asked why the respondent thought seat belt violations should be treated differently from other violations. The predominant reason mentioned was that wearing seat belts should be a personal choice (49%), which included statements about it not being a good law and that it infringes on their rights.

Figure 80
Reasons People Believe Seat Belt Violations Should Be Treated Differently From Other Violations



Qx: Most other traffic laws allow police to stop the vehicle whenever they see a violation. Why do you think seat belt violations should be treated differently from other traffic violations?

Base: Those who think that police should not be allowed to stop a vehicle for a seat belt violation.

Unweighted N=1703

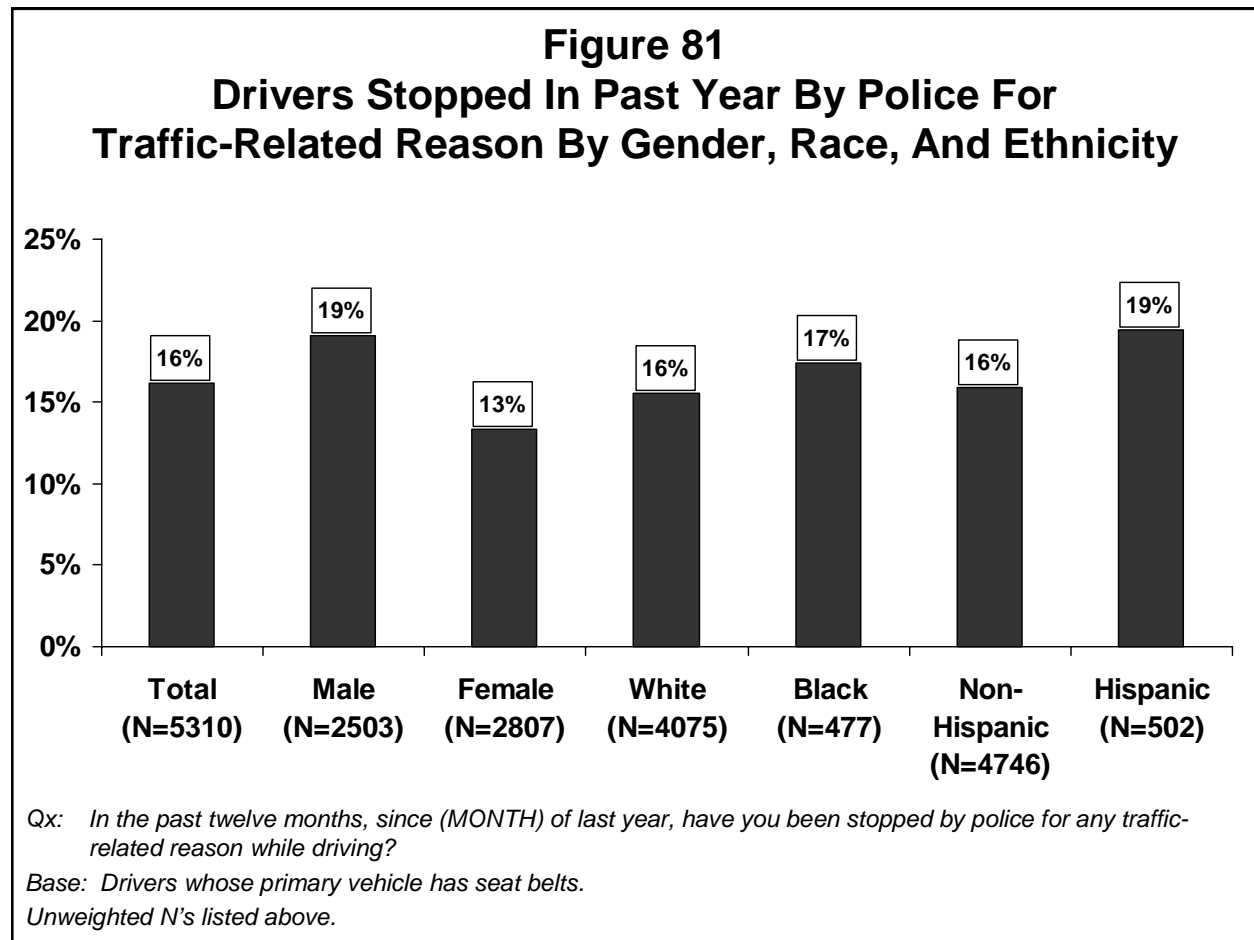
Stopped For Traffic-Related Reason In Past Year

The number of States having seat belt laws that contain primary enforcement provisions has risen over the years. However, many States continue to require secondary enforcement (see Appendix B for listing of enforcement provisions of State laws at the time of the survey). One of the major objections raised in efforts to convert from secondary to primary enforcement has been the concern expressed by some groups that an upgraded law would be differentially enforced against them.

This survey examined whether certain groups are subjected to traffic stops at different rates by law enforcement officers. Interviewers asked drivers if they had been stopped by police in the past twelve months for any traffic-related reason while driving. If they had been stopped, the interviewers asked the respondents if they were wearing their seat belt at the time of the stop. Lastly, interviewers questioned the respondents about the outcome of the stop. Specifically, the interviewers asked the respondents if they received a ticket for a traffic violation.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

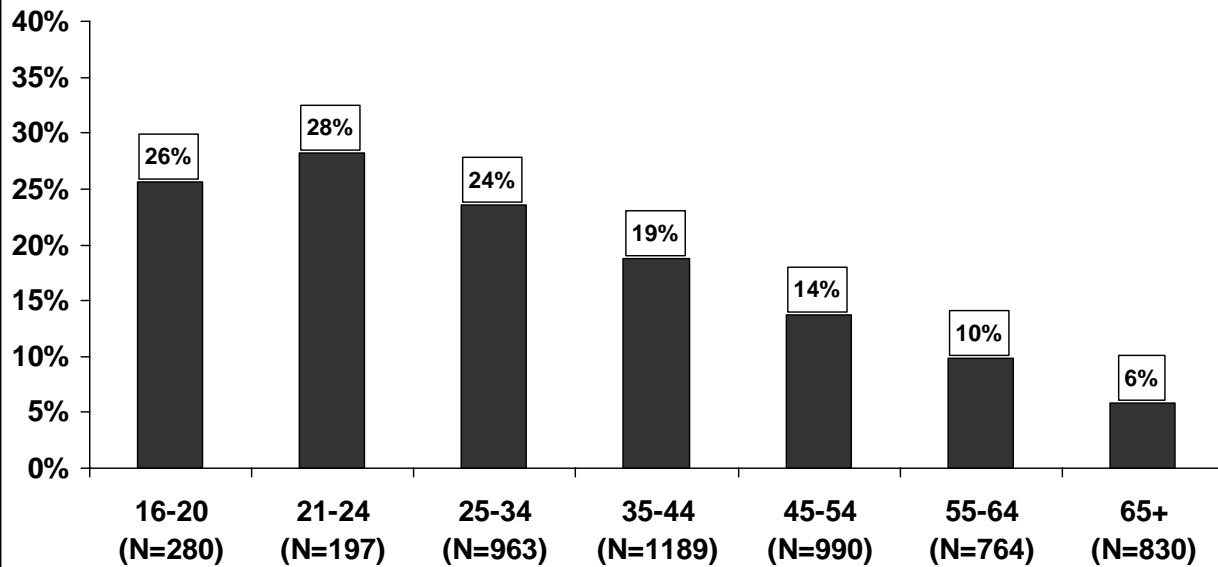
Sixteen percent of drivers said they had been stopped by police for a traffic-related reason in the past year. Males (19%) were more likely to have been stopped than females (13%). There was little difference by race and ethnicity.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Differences occurred when segmenting the sample of drivers by age group. Drivers were most likely to have been stopped by the police in the past year for a traffic-related reason if they were ages 21 through 24 (28%) or younger (26%). The figure declined to 24% of drivers ages 25-34, 19% of drivers ages 35-44, 14% of drivers ages 45-54, 10% of drivers ages 55-64, and 6% of drivers age 65 and older.

Figure 82
Drivers Stopped In Past Year By Police For
Traffic-Related Reason By Age



Qx: In the past twelve months, since (MONTH) of last year, have you been stopped by police for any traffic-related reason while driving?

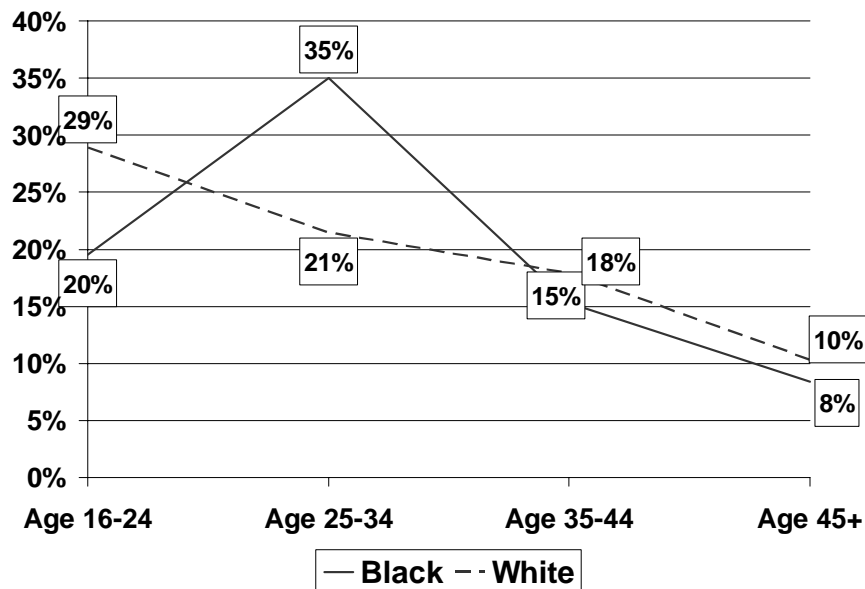
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The data were suggestive of some differences in the prevalence of police stops between Blacks and Whites at younger driver ages. However, the sample sizes for the Black driver age categories are too small to say anything definitive.

Figure 83
Drivers Stopped By Police In Past Year By Age And Race



Qx: In the past twelve months, since (MONTH) of last year, have you been stopped by police for any traffic-related reason while driving?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's:

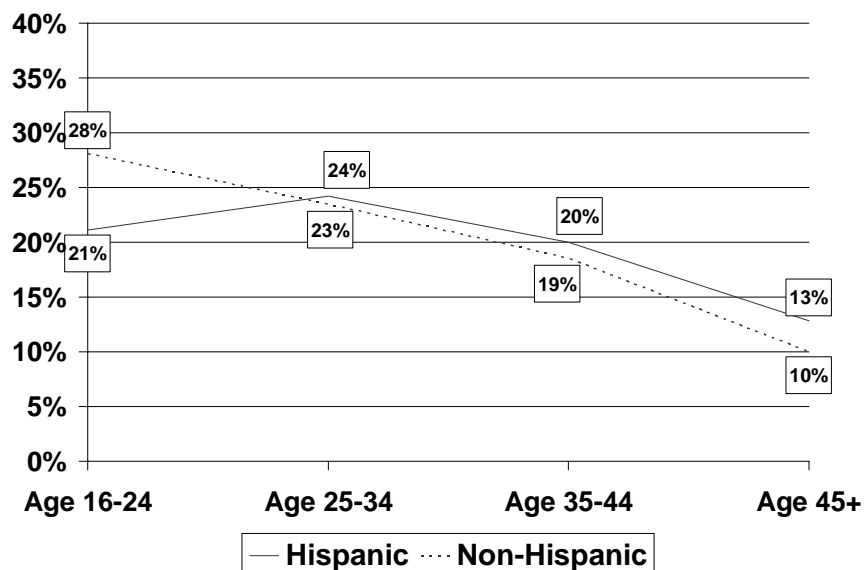
Black: Age 16-24 N = 49, Age 25-34 N = 119, Age 35-44 N = 104, Age 45+ N = 199

White: Age 16-24 N = 325, Age 25-34 N = 665, Age 35-44 N = 887, Age 45+ N = 2151

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

As with Blacks, there were relatively few Hispanic drivers in the specified age ranges. Figure 84 suggests little difference in police stops between Hispanics and non-Hispanics except possibly for the youngest age group.

**Figure 84
Drivers Stopped By Police In Past Year
By Age And Ethnicity**



Qx: In the past twelve months, since (MONTH) of last year, have you been stopped by police for any traffic-related reason while driving?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's:

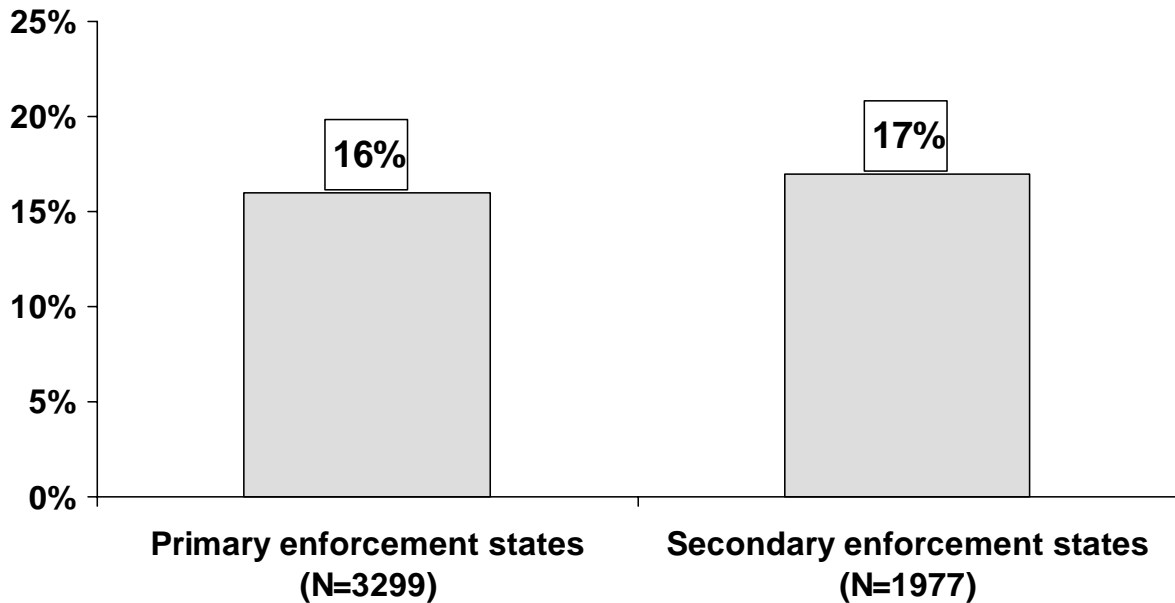
Hispanic: Age 16-24 N = 80, Age 25-34 N = 144, Age 35-44 N = 146, Age 45+ N = 128

Non-Hispanic: Age 16-24 N = 394, Age 25-34 N = 816, Age 35-44 N = 1041, Age 45+ N = 2436

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers in primary enforcement States were about as likely to have been stopped in the past year by police for a traffic-related reason as those in secondary enforcement States. Sixteen percent of those in primary enforcement States had been stopped, as well as 16% in secondary enforcement States.

Figure 85
Drivers Stopped In Past Year For Traffic-Related Reason
By Enforcement Provisions Of State Law



Qx: *In the past twelve months, since (MONTH) of last year, have you been stopped by police for any traffic-related reason while driving?*

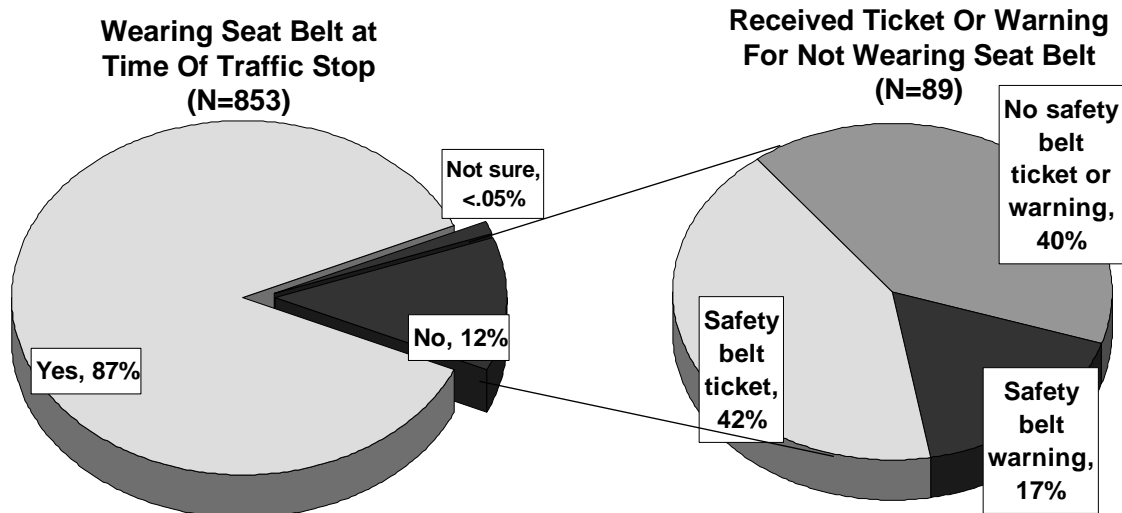
Base: *Drivers*

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Of those persons who said that they had been stopped by police in the past year for a traffic-related reason while driving, the vast majority (87%) answered that they were wearing a seat belt at the time. The majority of those not wearing a seat belt when stopped had received a ticket (42%) or warning (17%) for violating seat belt laws.

Figure 86
Whether Driver Was Wearing Seat Belt At Traffic Stop



Qx: Were you wearing a seat belt when you were stopped? (IF STOPPED MORE THAN ONCE IN PAST 12 MONTHS, ASK ABOUT MOST RECENT TIME)

Qx: Did you receive a ticket for violating seat belt laws?

Qx: Did you receive a warning for violating seat belt laws?

Base: Stopped by police in past 12 months for a traffic-related reason while driving.

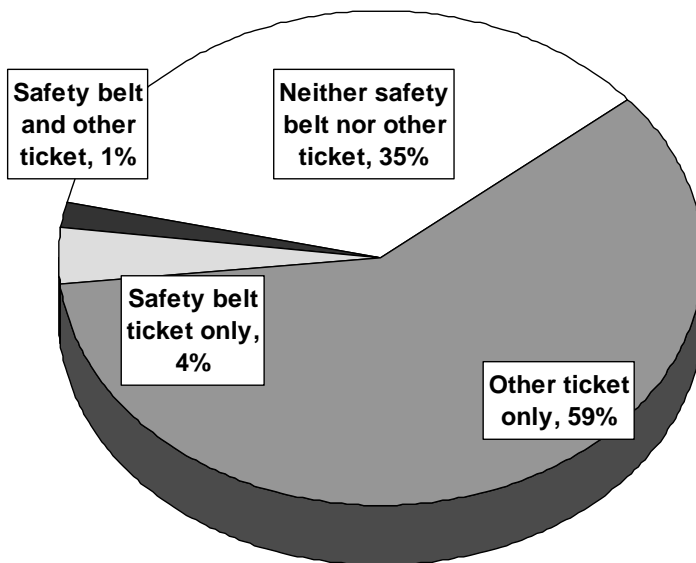
Unweighted N's listed above.

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Among all drivers who were stopped for a traffic-related reason, 64% received a ticket for some type of traffic violation. Most often, they did not get a ticket for a seat belt violation (understandable since most were wearing their seat belts) but received a ticket for something else (59%). In a few cases (4%), they received a seat belt ticket but no other citation. Less than four-in-ten (35%) reported that they did not receive any type of ticket.

Figure 87
Outcome Of Traffic Stop



Qx: *In the past twelve, since (MONTH) of last year, have you been stopped by police for any traffic-related reason while driving?*

Qx: *Did you receive a ticket for violating seat belt laws?*

Qx: *Did you receive a ticket for some other traffic violation?*

Qx: *Did you receive a ticket for any traffic violation?*

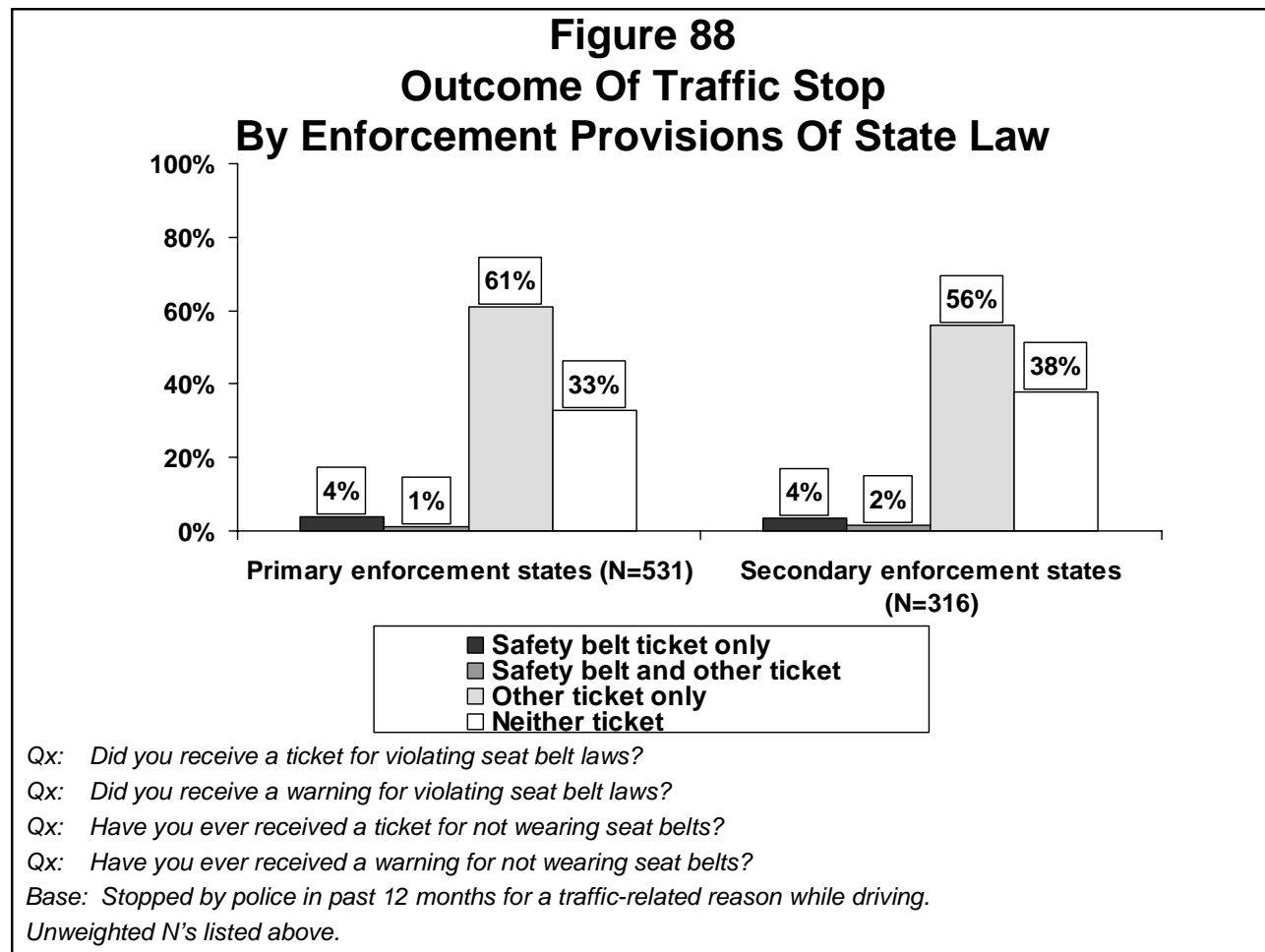
Base: *Stopped by police in past 12 months for a traffic-related reason while driving.*

Unweighted N=853

*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

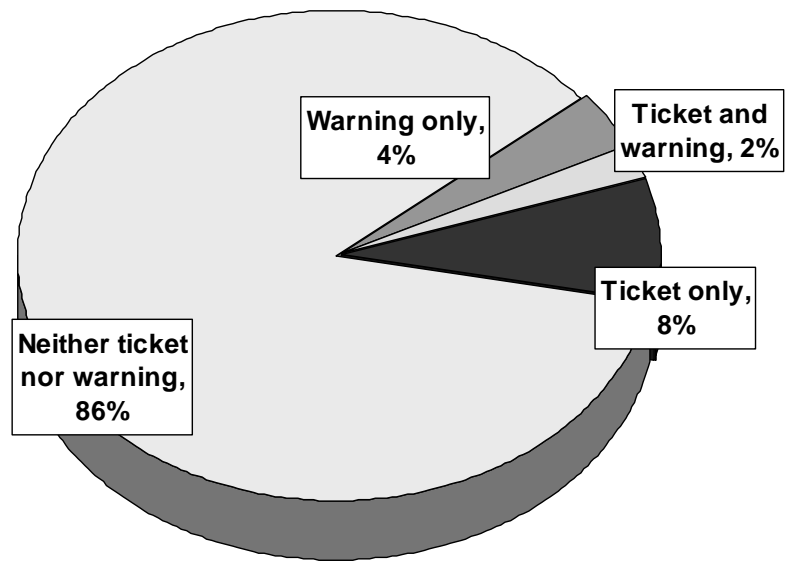
Sixty-six percent of the drivers in primary enforcement States received a ticket when they were stopped by the police, compared to 62% of the drivers in secondary enforcement States.



Ever Received Ticket Or Warning For Seat Belt Violation

Fourteen percent of the population age 16 and older has received a ticket and/or warning for violating the seat belt laws. Specifically, 8% have received a ticket only, 2% have received both a ticket and a warning, and 4% have received only a warning. The vast majority, 86%, have received neither a ticket nor warning.

Figure 89
Ever Received Ticket Or Warning For Seat Belt Violation

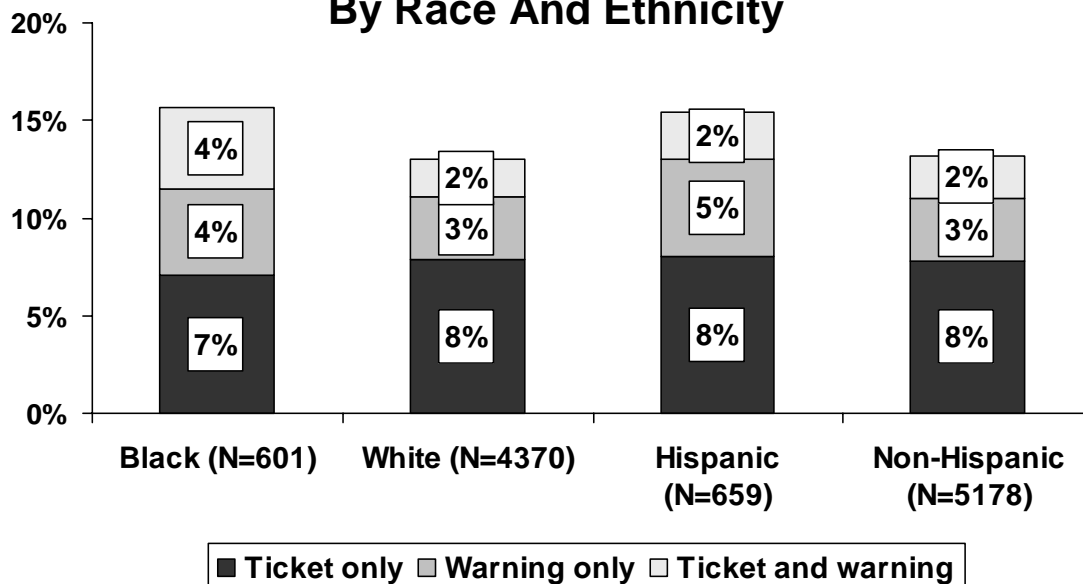


Qx: Did you receive a ticket for violating seat belt laws?
Qx: Did you receive a warning for violating seat belt laws?
Qx: Have you ever received a ticket for not wearing seat belts?
Qx: Have you ever received a warning for not wearing seat belts?
Base: Total population 16+.
Unweighted N=5908

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Overall, 14% of the population age 16 and older had received a ticket and/or warning at some time in the past for a seat belt violation. The figure was 15% for Blacks, 13% for Whites, 16%¹⁴ for Hispanics, and 13% for non-Hispanics. Specifically regarding tickets (either ticket only or ticket and warning), 11% of Blacks, 10% of Whites, 10% of Hispanics, and 10% of non-Hispanics had received seat belt citations.

**Figure 90
Ever Received Seat Belt Ticket Or Warning
By Race And Ethnicity**

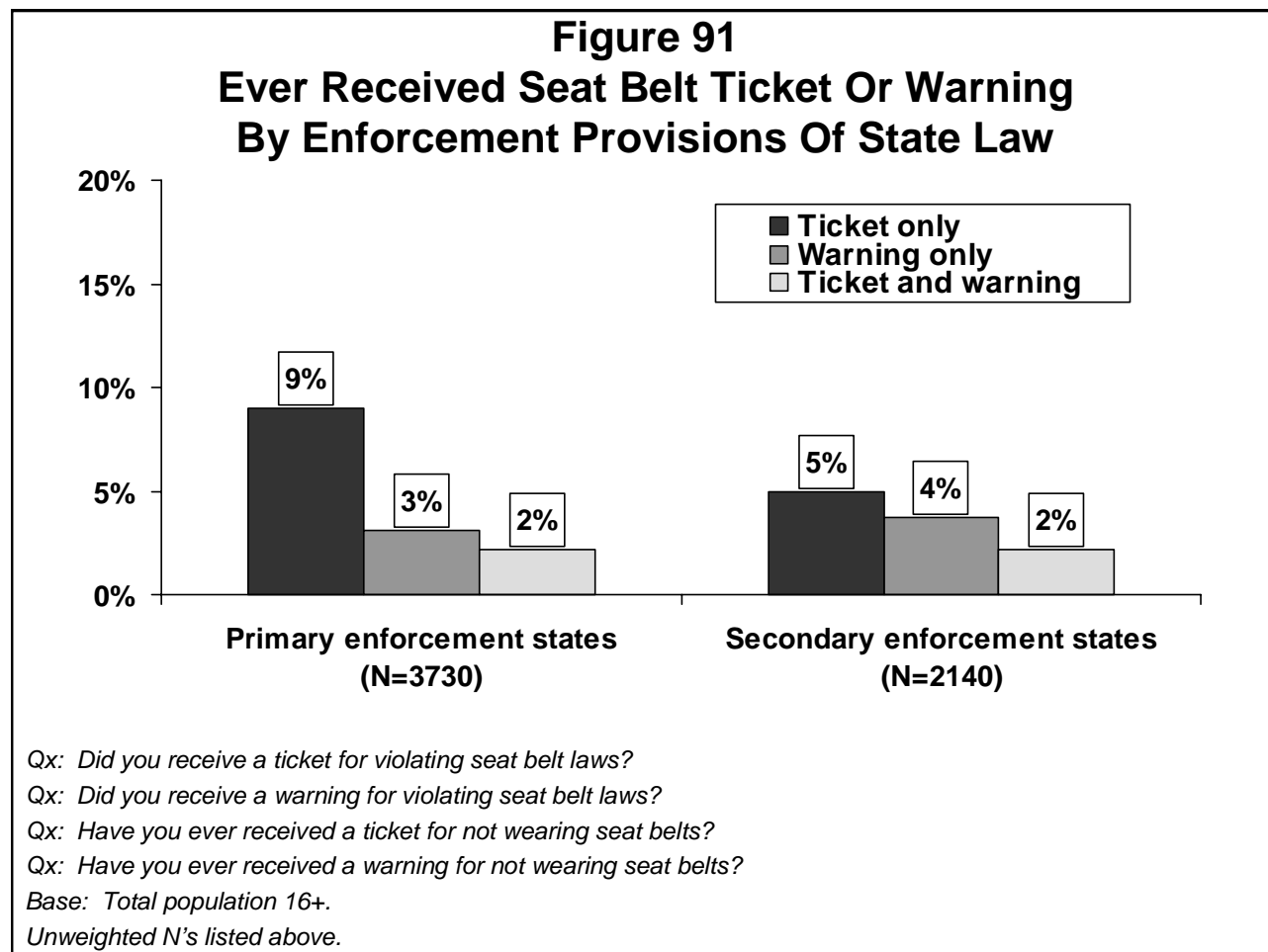


Qx: Did you receive a ticket for violating seat belt laws?
 Qx: Did you receive a warning for violating seat belt laws?
 Qx: Have you ever received a ticket for not wearing seat belts?
 Qx: Have you ever received a warning for not wearing seat belts?
 Base: Total population 16+.
 Unweighted N's listed above.

¹⁴ The numbers in this paragraph do not all equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

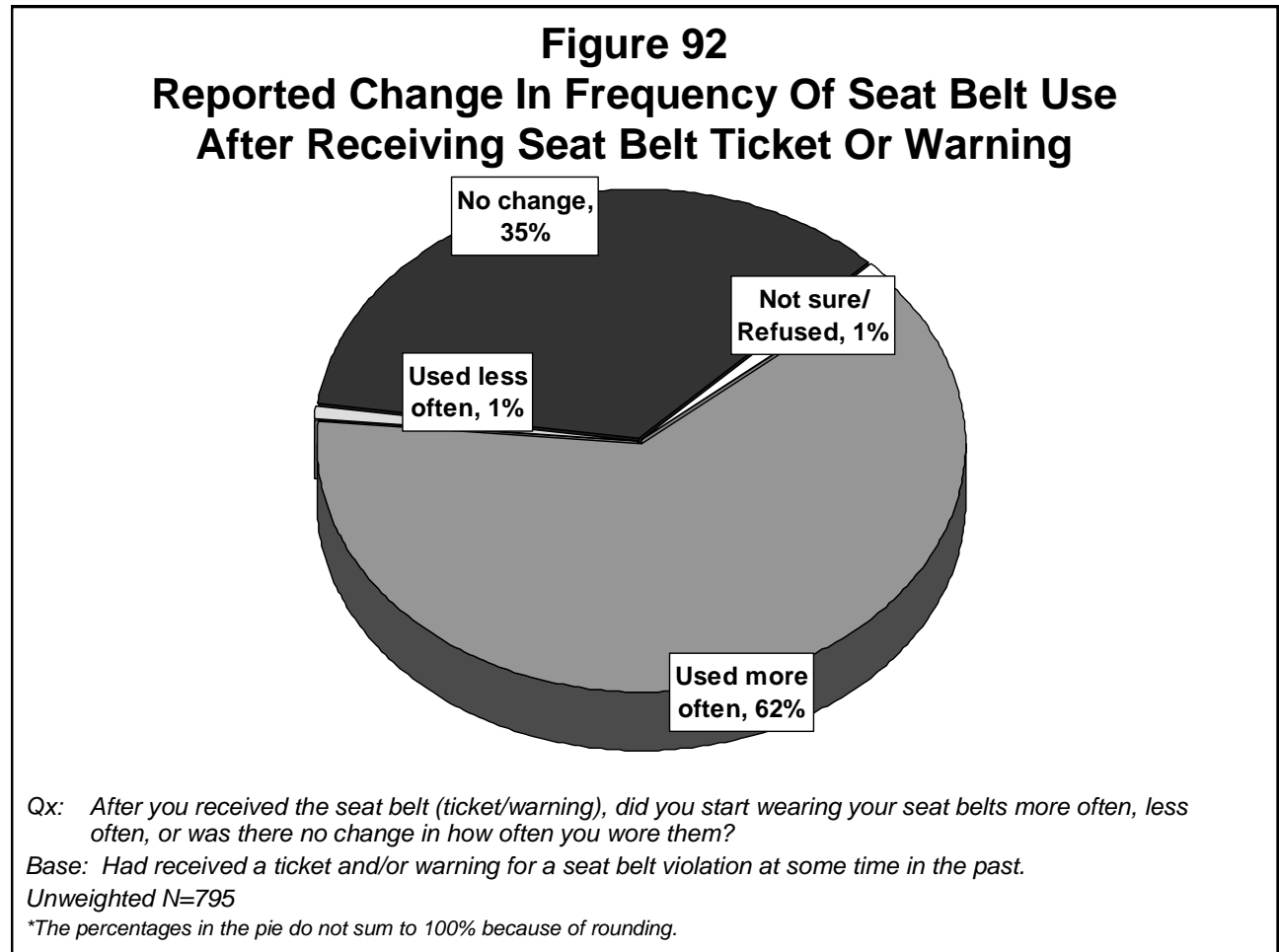
In States having seat belt laws with primary enforcement provisions, 15%¹⁵ of the population age 16 and older had received a ticket and/or warning for a seat belt violation. In secondary enforcement States, 12% had received a ticket and/or warning.



¹⁵ The numbers in this paragraph do not equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

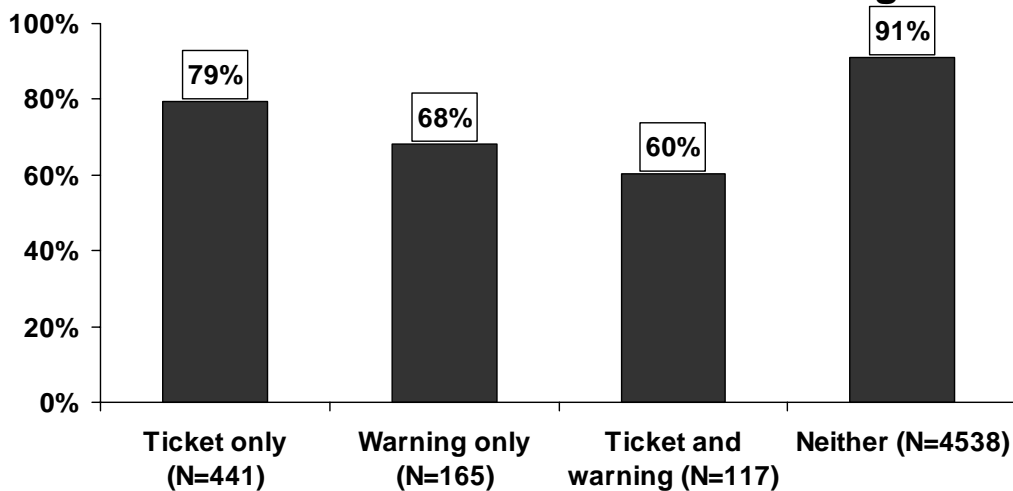
When asked if their frequency of seat belt use had changed after they received the seat belt ticket or warning, most persons (62%) said that they started using their seat belts more often while 35% indicated that there was no change.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Although most persons who had received a seat belt ticket or warning said that their use of seat belts increased afterwards, their reported level of current seat belt use still tended to be lower than that of persons who had received neither a ticket nor a warning. Among drivers, 79% of those who had received a ticket only, 68% of those who had received a warning only, and 60% of those who had received a ticket and warning said that they used their seat belt “all of the time” while driving. In contrast, 91% of drivers who had received neither a seat belt ticket nor warning reported wearing their seat belt “all of the time” while driving.

Figure 93
Driver “All The Time” Seat Belt Use By Whether Ever Received Seat Belt Ticket Or Warning



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Qx: Did you receive a ticket for violating seat belt laws?

Qx: Did you receive a warning for violating seat belt laws?

Qx: Have you ever received a ticket for not wearing seat belts?

Qx: Have you ever received a warning for not wearing seat belts?

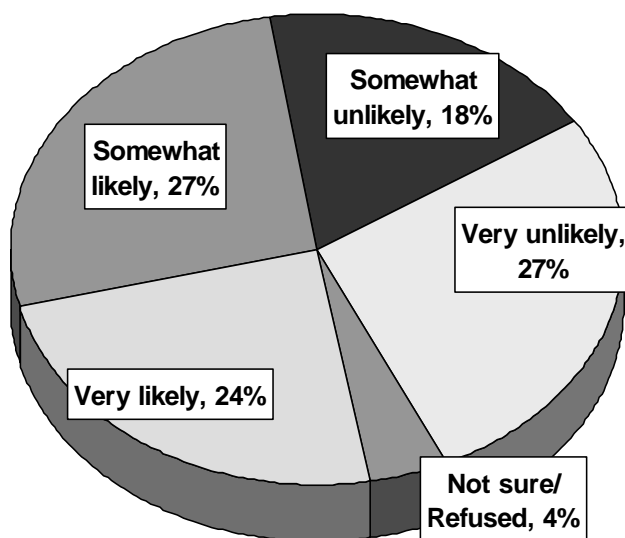
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed For Non-Use Of Seat Belts

Drivers were asked their likelihood of being ticketed if they did not wear a seat belt at all during the next six months while driving. Half (50%¹⁶) considered it likely; only one quarter (24%) considered it very likely. Just over one-quarter of drivers (27%) thought they would be very unlikely to be ticketed. Readers are reminded that most non-use occurs among persons who use seat belts at least on occasion (see Chapter 1). Thus the question wording took the most extreme form of non-use, and removed the option taken by many drivers of responding to their own assessments of risk.

Figure 94
Likelihood Of Receiving A Seat Belt Ticket
If Seat Belts Were Not Worn For Six Months



Qx: Assume that you do not wear your seat belt AT ALL while driving over the next six months. How likely do you think you will be to receive a ticket for not wearing a seat belt?

Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

Unweighted N=5310

¹⁶ The number does not equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers who previously had received a seat belt ticket were more likely than non-cited drivers to view themselves at-risk of being ticketed if they did not wear their seat belt at all over the next six months.

Table 42
Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed
By Whether Ever Received A Seat Belt Ticket Or Warning

Qx: Assume that you do not wear your seat belt AT ALL while driving over the next six months. How likely do you think you will be to receive a ticket for not wearing a seat belt?

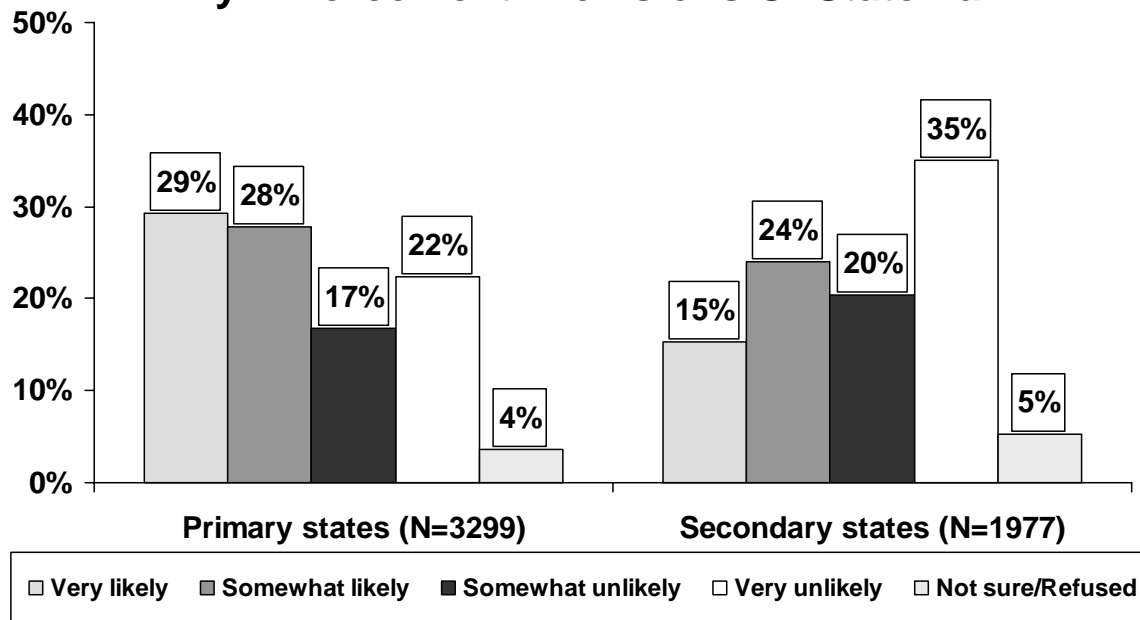
Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

Perceived risk of being ticketed	Ever received ticket or warning			
	Ticket only (N=441)	Ticket and warning (N=119)	Warning only (N=166)	Neither ticket nor warning (N=4563)
Very likely	42%	38%	24%	22%
Somewhat likely	24%	26%	25%	27%
Somewhat unlikely	14%	17%	27%	18%
Very unlikely	16%	17%	16%	29%
Not sure/Refused	3%	2%	8%	4%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The perceived risk of being ticketed differed substantially according to the enforcement provisions of the State law. In States permitting primary enforcement of seat belt laws, more than one-half of drivers (57%) said they were somewhat or very likely to be ticketed if they did not wear seat belts at all while driving over the next six months. In contrast, two out of five drivers (40%) in secondary enforcement States considered themselves to be somewhat or very likely to be ticketed.

Figure 95
Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed For Non-Use
By Enforcement Provisions Of State Law



Qx: Assume that you do not wear your seat belt AT ALL while driving over the next six months. How likely do you think you will be to receive a ticket for not wearing a seat belt?

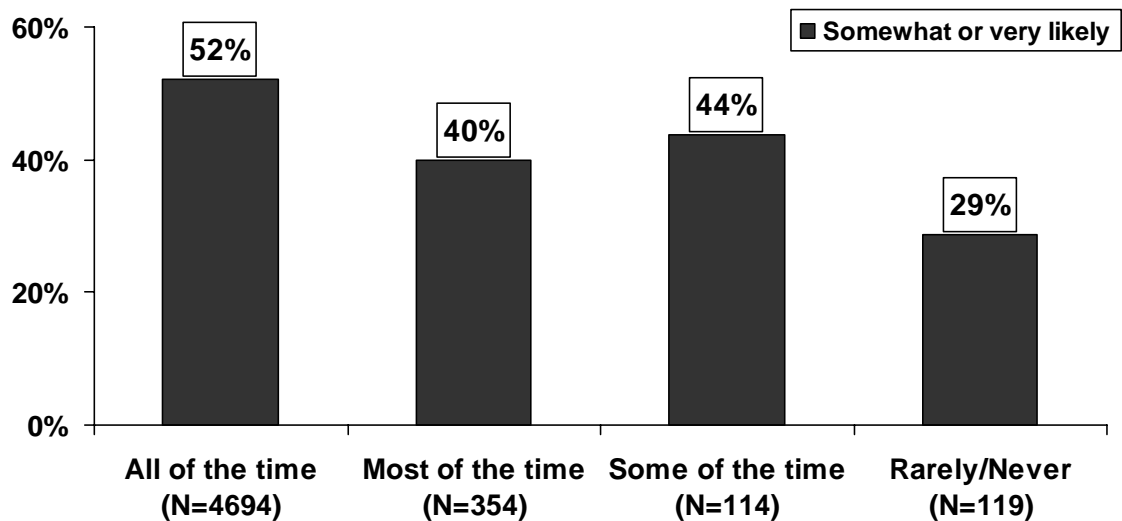
Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers who wore their seat belts regularly were more likely than other drivers to perceive themselves at-risk of being ticketed if they did not use their seat belts at all. Among self-reported “all of the time” seat belt users, 52% thought it was either somewhat likely or very likely that they would receive a ticket if they did not wear a seat belt at all while driving over the next six months. The number dropped to 40% among “most of the time” users, and 44% among “some of the time” users. Almost three-in-ten (29%) of those who said they rarely or never wore seat belts thought they would likely get a ticket.

Figure 96
Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed For Non-Use
By Drivers' Reported Frequency Of Seat Belt Use



Qx: When driving this (car/truck/van) how often do you wear your (shoulder/lap) belt?

Qx: Assume that you do not wear your seat belt AT ALL while driving over the next six months. How likely do you think you will be to receive a ticket for not wearing a seat belt?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Among the demographic groups listed in Table 43, greatest perceived risk of being ticketed for non-use of seat belts over a period of six months was recorded for Hispanics. Two-thirds of Hispanics (67%) considered it very or somewhat likely they would be given a ticket, compared to 48%¹⁷ of non-Hispanics. The gap was about two-thirds as large between Blacks (58%) and Whites (47%).

Table 43
Perceived Risk Of Being Ticketed For Non-Use
By Gender, Age, Race, And Ethnicity

Qx: Assume that you do not wear your seat belt AT ALL while driving over the next six months. How likely do you think you will be to receive a ticket for not wearing a seat belt.

Base: Drives a motor vehicle.

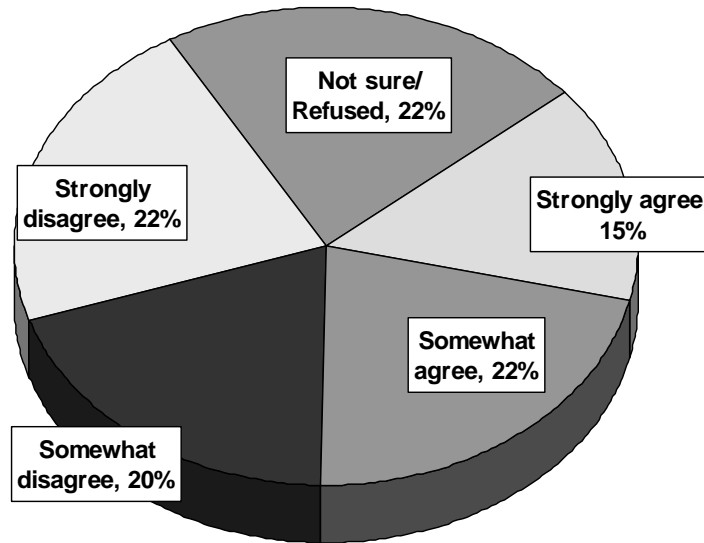
	Unweighted N	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Not sure/ Refused
Total	(5310)	24%	27%	18%	27%	4%
Gender						
Female	(2807)	25%	28%	18%	25%	5%
Male	(2503)	23%	25%	19%	29%	4%
Age						
16-20	(280)	14%	32%	23%	30%	1%
21-24	(197)	24%	25%	21%	28%	2%
25-34	(963)	26%	29%	18%	25%	3%
35-44	(1189)	25%	25%	19%	28%	3%
45-54	(990)	22%	25%	20%	28%	5%
55-64	(764)	25%	27%	18%	25%	5%
65+	(830)	26%	26%	13%	27%	9%
Race						
Black	(477)	30%	28%	16%	22%	5%
White	(4075)	21%	27%	20%	29%	4%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	(502)	41%	26%	10%	19%	4%
Non-Hispanic	(4746)	22%	27%	19%	28%	4%

¹⁷ The numbers in this paragraph do not all equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

One of the attitude questions included in the survey asked respondents their level of agreement with the statement “Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations.” The public was more likely to disagree with that statement (41%¹⁸) than to agree (36%). However, many people (22%) said they did not know the answer.

Figure 97
Police In My Community Generally Do Not Bother To Write Tickets For Seat Belt Violations



Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. "Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations."

Base: Total population 16+.

Unweighted N=5908

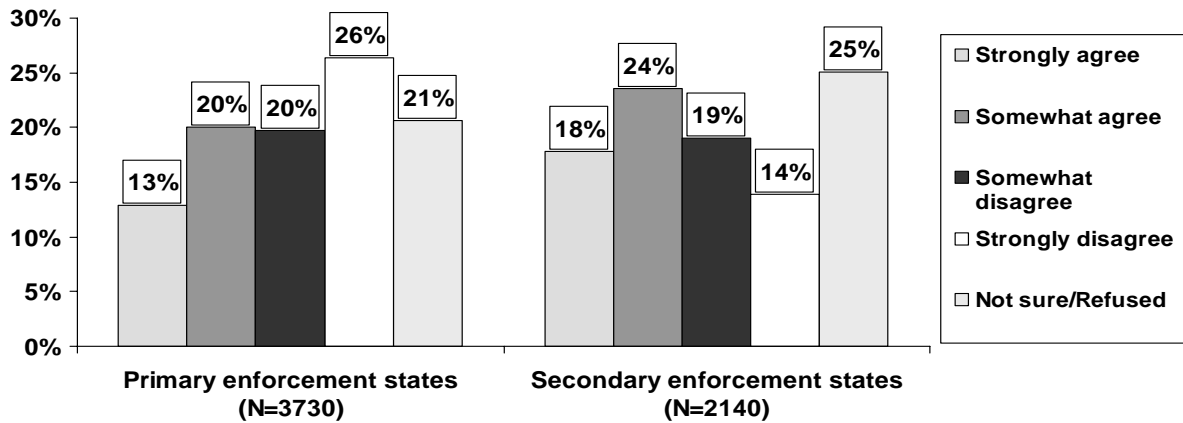
*The percentages in the pie do not sum to 100% because of rounding.

¹⁸ Not all the numbers in this paragraph equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Respondents were less likely to (strongly or somewhat) agree that police in their community did not bother to write seat belt tickets if they lived in primary enforcement States (33%) than in secondary enforcement States (42%).

Figure 98
Police In Community Do Not Bother To Write Belt Tickets
By Enforcement Provisions Of State Law



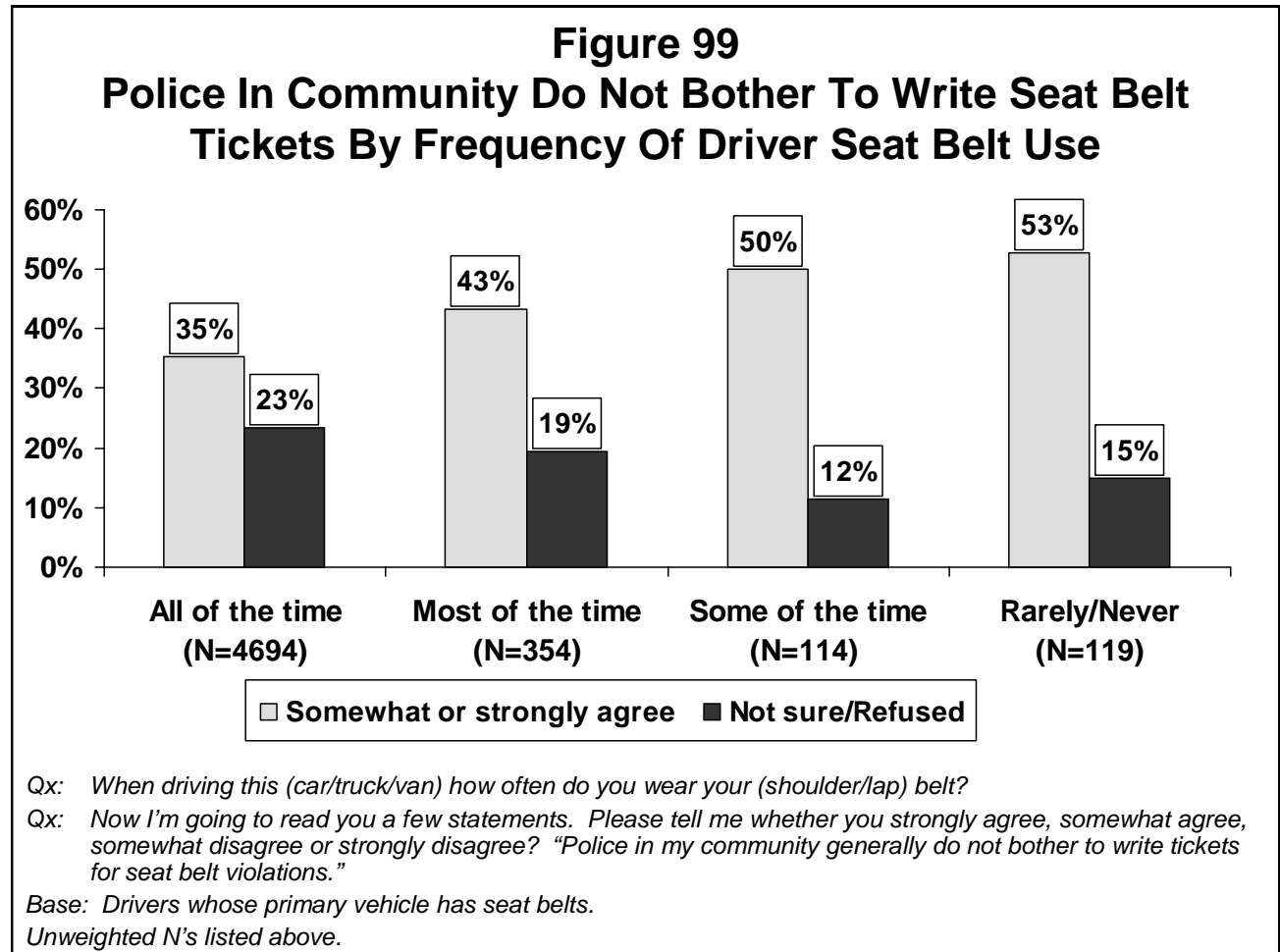
Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. "Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations."

Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Infrequent users of seat belts were more likely than frequent users to believe that local police don't enforce the seat belt law. Among "all the time" seat belt users, about one-third (35%) agreed with the statement that police in their community do not bother to write seat belt tickets compared to about one-half of sometime/rare/never users.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Persons ages 16-20 (51%) and 21-24 (44%) were most likely among the groups listed below to agree that ticketing for seat belt violations generally did not occur in their community; those age 65 and older were the most unsure (38%). Blacks and Hispanics differed from Whites and non-Hispanics in that the former two groups were more likely to strongly agree or strongly disagree with the statement and less likely to express uncertainty.

Table 44
“Police In My Community Generally Do Not Bother To Write Tickets For Seat Belt Violations”
By Gender, Age, Race, And Ethnicity

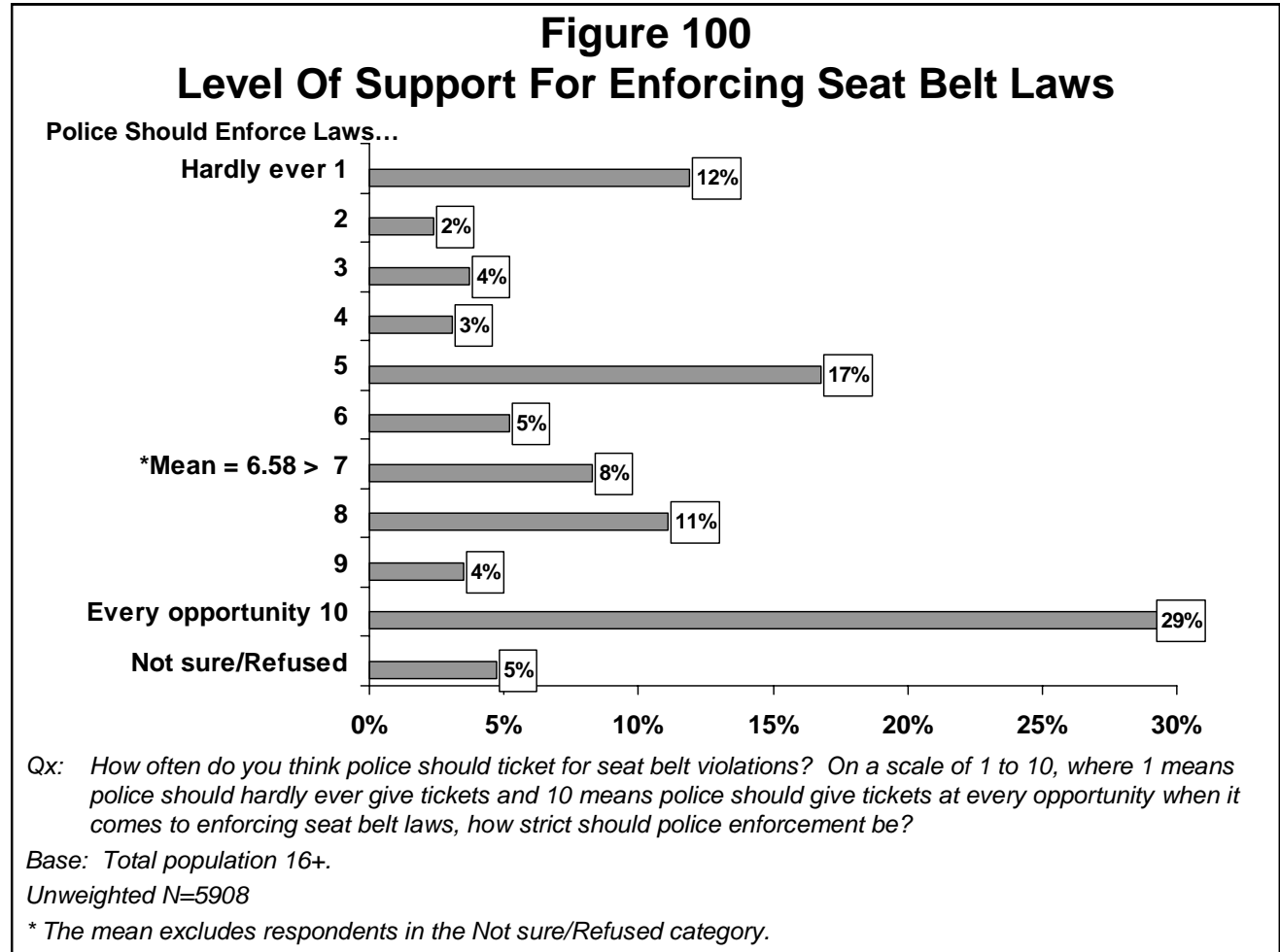
Qx: *Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. "Police in my community generally do not bother to write tickets for seat belt violations."*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

	Unweighted N	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure/ Refused
Total	(5908)	15%	22%	20%	22%	22%
Gender						
Female	(3207)	15%	22%	18%	20%	25%
Male	(2701)	15%	21%	22%	23%	19%
Age						
16-20	(344)	20%	31%	25%	16%	7%
21-24	(243)	14%	29%	22%	21%	13%
25-34	(1057)	13%	21%	26%	23%	16%
35-44	(1277)	15%	22%	20%	23%	20%
45-54	(1063)	15%	21%	19%	23%	22%
55-64	(835)	13%	21%	16%	23%	28%
65+	(980)	15%	16%	13%	19%	38%
Race						
Black	(601)	18%	19%	16%	28%	19%
White	(4370)	13%	23%	21%	19%	24%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	(659)	21%	19%	17%	31%	12%
Non-Hispanic	(5178)	14%	22%	20%	20%	24%

Preferred Level Of Enforcement

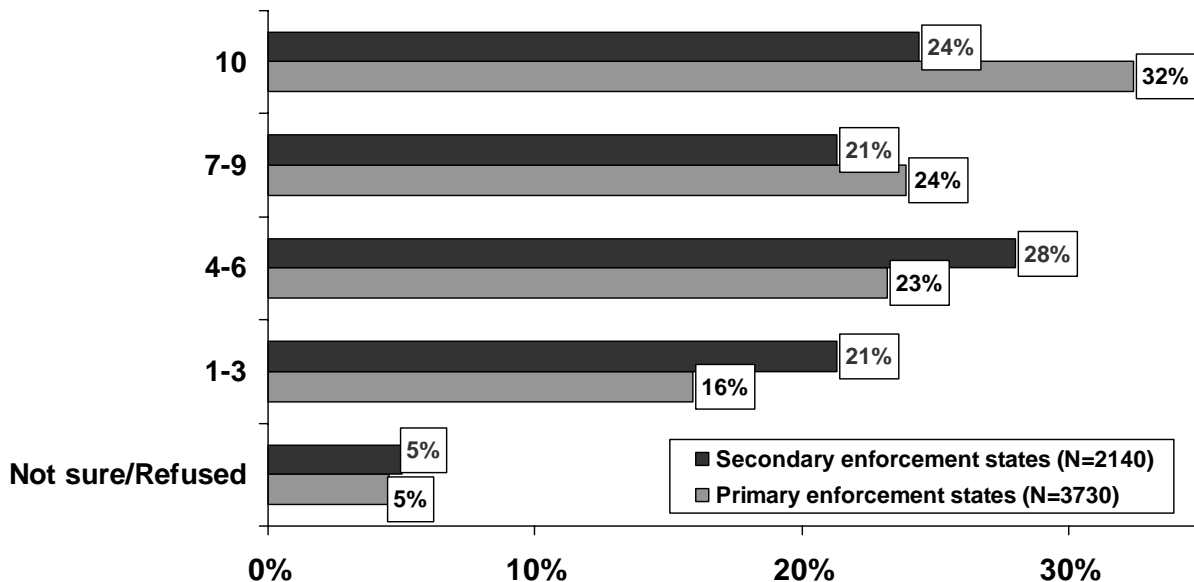
Support for seat belt law enforcement was mixed, with some favoring strong enforcement and others wanting little or no enforcement. Interviewers asked respondents how strictly police should enforce seat belt laws, using a 1-to-10 scale, where 1 meant police should hardly ever give tickets for seat belt violations and 10 meant they should give tickets at every opportunity. Most frequently, the respondents said they favored ticketing at every opportunity, although there also was clustering at the middle and low end of the scale. The average score was 6.6.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Persons in primary enforcement States tended towards supporting stricter enforcement of seat belt laws than did those in secondary enforcement States. The mean score recorded for the respondents in primary enforcement States was 6.8 on the ten-point scale, versus 6.1 for respondents in secondary enforcement States.

Figure 101
Level Of Support For Enforcing Seat Belt Laws
By Enforcement Provisions Of State Law



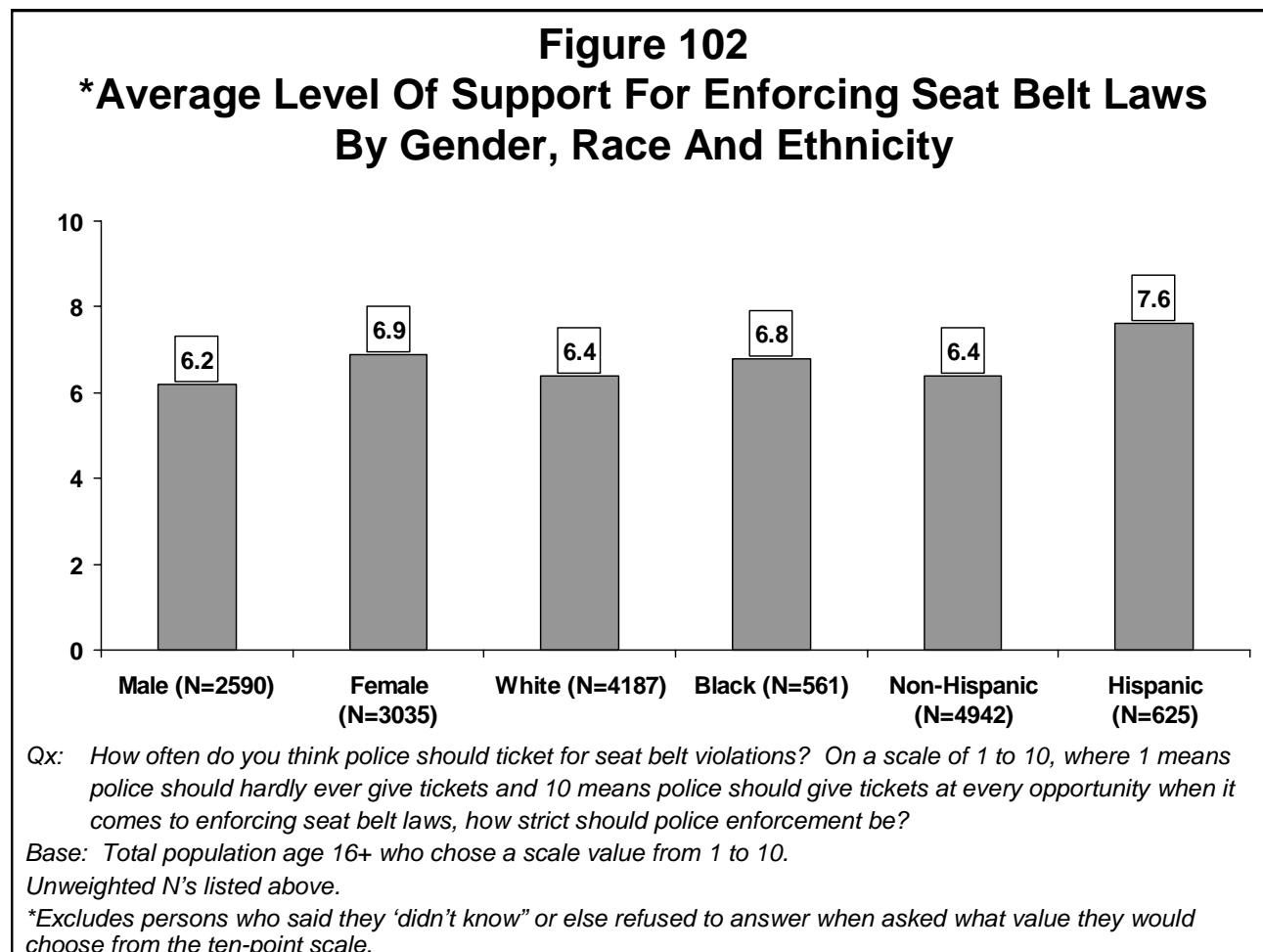
Qx: How often do you think police should ticket for seat belt violations? On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means police should hardly ever give tickets and 10 means police should give tickets at every opportunity when it comes to enforcing seat belt laws, how strict should police enforcement be?

Base: Total population age 16+.

Unweighted N's listed above.

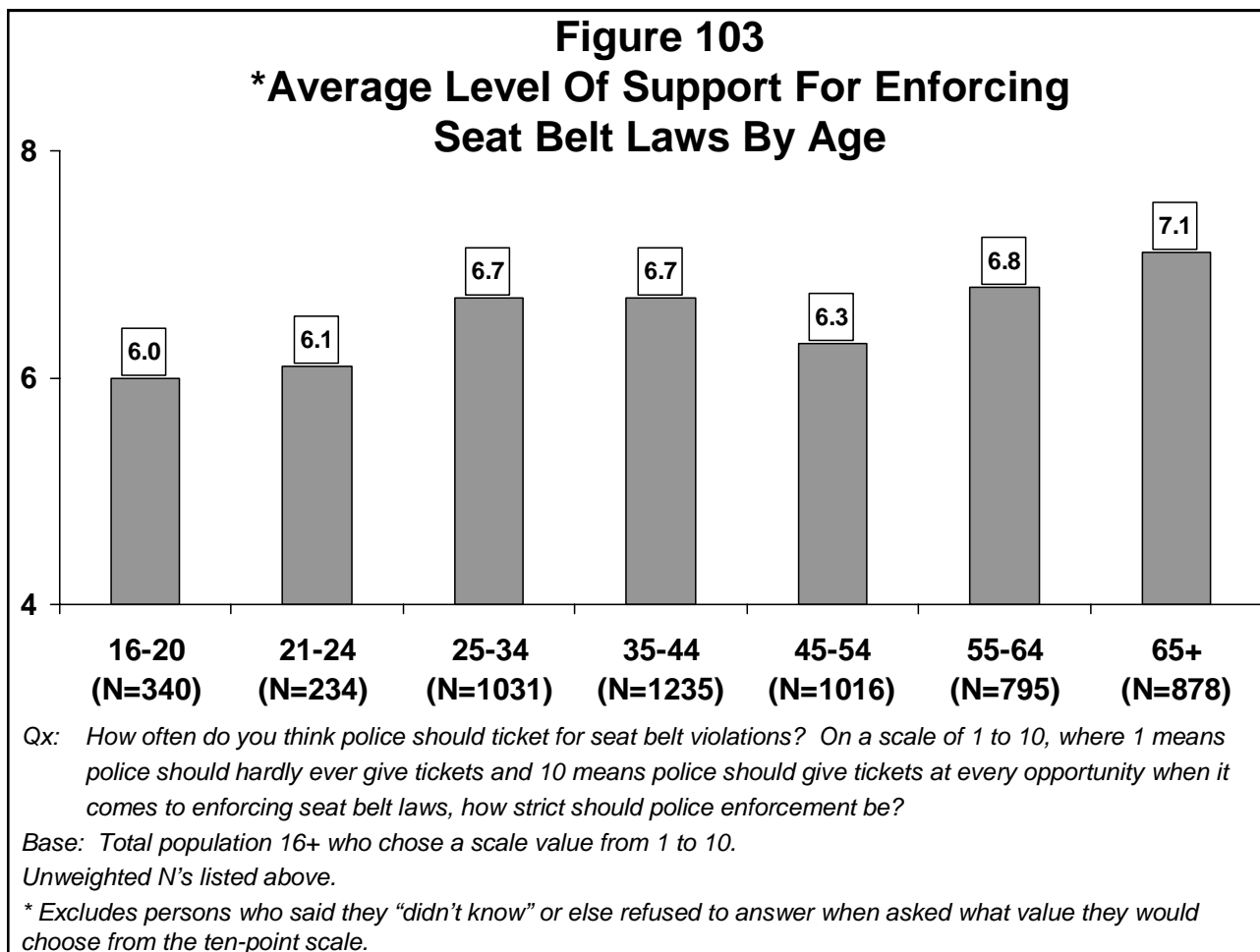
2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Hispanics voiced the strongest support for enforcement of seat belt laws, providing an average score of 7.6 on the ten-point scale. Blacks (6.8) and females (6.9) also were above the mean population average of 6.58.



2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

The least support across age groups in level of support for enforcement of seat belt laws appeared among persons 16-24. The greatest support occurred among persons 65 years and older.



2007 SURVEY RESULTS

CHAPTER 5: 1994-2007 TRENDS

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Drivers And Vehicles, 1994-2007

There has been little appreciable change between 1994 and 2007 in the frequency with which the public age 16 and older drives motor vehicles. The most noticeable finding has been a slow increase over time in the percentage of non-drivers.

Table 45
Driving Frequency, 1994-2007

Qx: *How often do you drive a motor vehicle?*

Base: *Total population age 16+.*

Driving frequency	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
Almost every day	79%	80%	78%	78%	76%	76%
A few days a week	10%	10%	10%	9%	10%	10%
A few days a month	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
A few days a year	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Never	8%	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Cars continued to decrease as a proportion of the vehicle fleet. Meanwhile, the percentage of persons who answered that their primary vehicle was a sport utility vehicle edged upwards, although part of the increase since 1996 may be from a slight change in the wording of the question. The term “sport utility vehicle” was included in the stem of the survey question beginning in 1998.

Table 46
Type Of Primary Vehicle Driven, 1994-2007

Qx: *Is the vehicle you drive most often a car, van, motorcycle, sport utility vehicle, pickup truck, or other type of truck?*
Base: *Drives a motor vehicle.*

Driving frequency	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
Car	71%	67%	65%	62%	59%	54%
Van/Minivan	9%	9%	10%	10%	10%	9%
Sport utility vehicle	3%	5%	8%	10%	13%	17%
Pickup truck	15%	17%	16%	16%	16%	18%

2007 MOTOR VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY SURVEY: Seat Belt Report

Type Of Driver-Side Seat Belts, 1994-2007

The 2007 survey observed a continued increase in one-piece belt systems. The one-piece manual lap and shoulder system now accounts for 83% of driver seat belts in primary vehicles. The once ubiquitous lap only system now appears in only 1% of all primary vehicles at the driver seating position.

Table 47
Seat Belt Configuration In Front Seat Of
Primary Vehicle, 1994-2007

Qx: *Do the seat belts in the front seat of the (car/truck/van) go across your shoulder only, across your lap only, or across both your shoulder and your lap?*

Qx: *Are the shoulder and lap belt one piece or are they two separate belts?*

Qx: *Are both the shoulder and lap belt automatic, is only the shoulder belt automatic or is neither the shoulder or lap belt automatic?*

Qx: *Is the shoulder belt automatic or do you have to fasten it?*

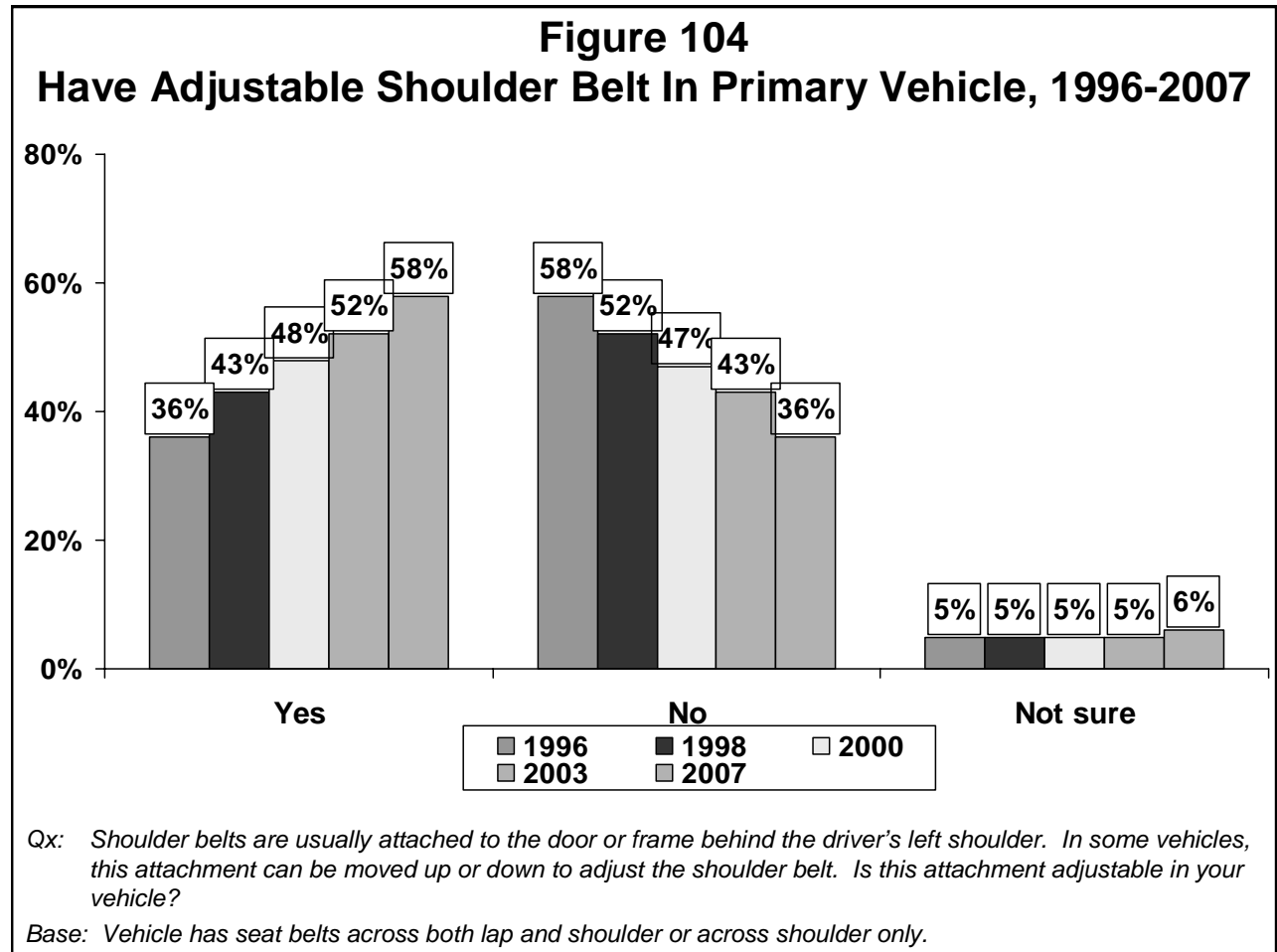
Base: *Vehicle driven most often has seat belts.*

Seat belt type	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
Basic configuration						
Shoulder only	8%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%
Lap only	4%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Shoulder and lap	88%	90%	90%	91%	92%	93%
Type of driver seat belt						
One-piece systems	[85%]	[86%]	[88%]	[89%]	[91%]	[95%]
Lap belt only	4%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Lap/shoulder manual	70%	72%	75%	76%	80%	83%
Lap/shoulder automatic	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Shoulder only manual	7%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Shoulder only automatic	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
One-piece-NS if automatic	*	*	*	*	*	*
Two-piece systems	[14%]	[13%]	[12%]	[10%]	[8%]	[5%]
Lap manual/shoulder manual	6%	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Lap manual/shoulder automatic	8%	7%	6%	5%	4%	2%
Lap automatic/shoulder automatic	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	*
Two-piece-NS if automatic	*	*	*	*	*	*
Not sure if one-piece or two-piece	1%	1%	*	1%	1%	1%

*Less than 0.5%.

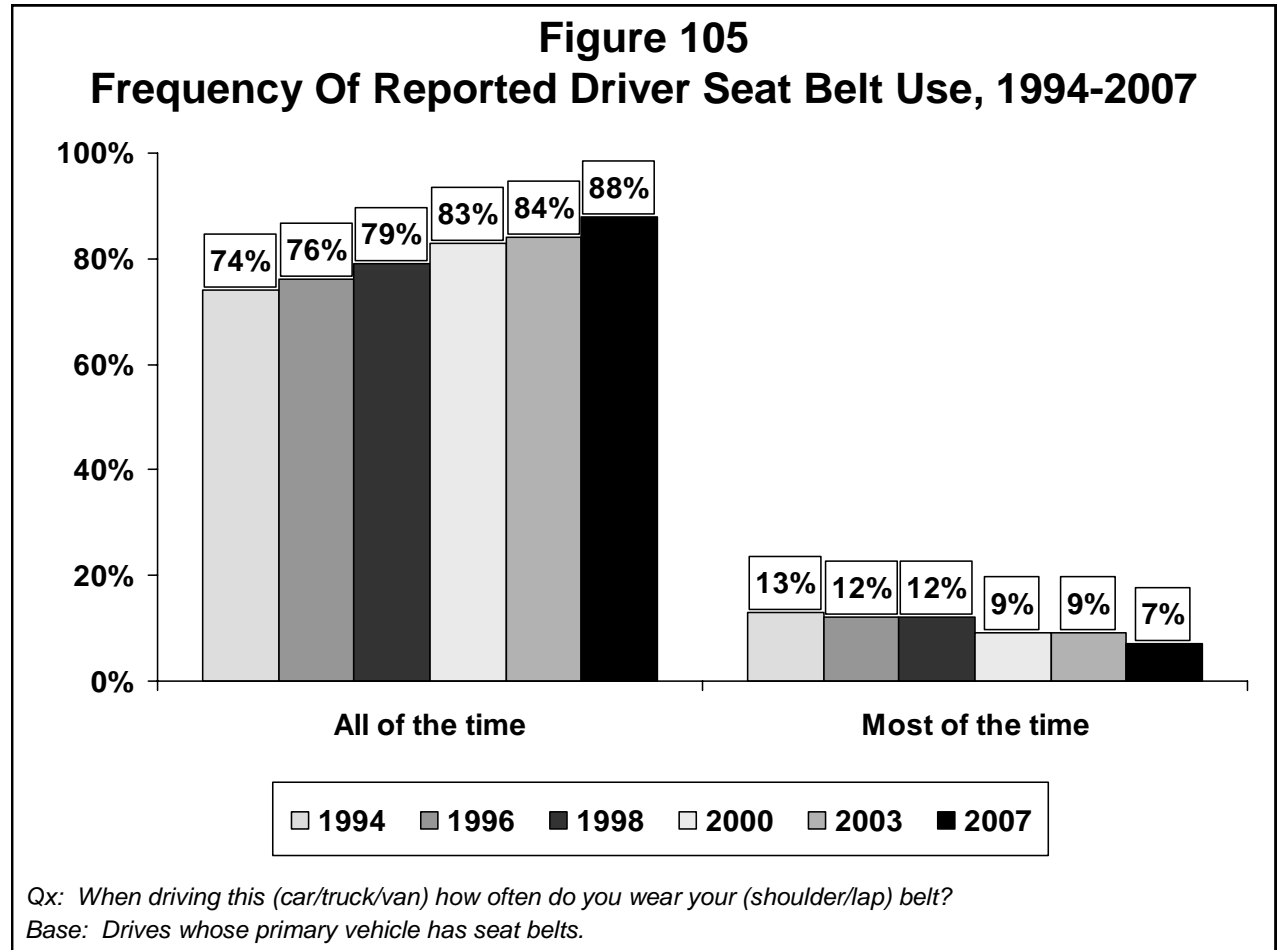
2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

The 2007 survey continued to show penetration of the vehicle fleet by adjustable shoulder belts. Fifty-eight percent of drivers in 2007 had adjustable shoulder belts in their primary vehicle compared to 36% in 1996. (This question was not asked in 1994.)



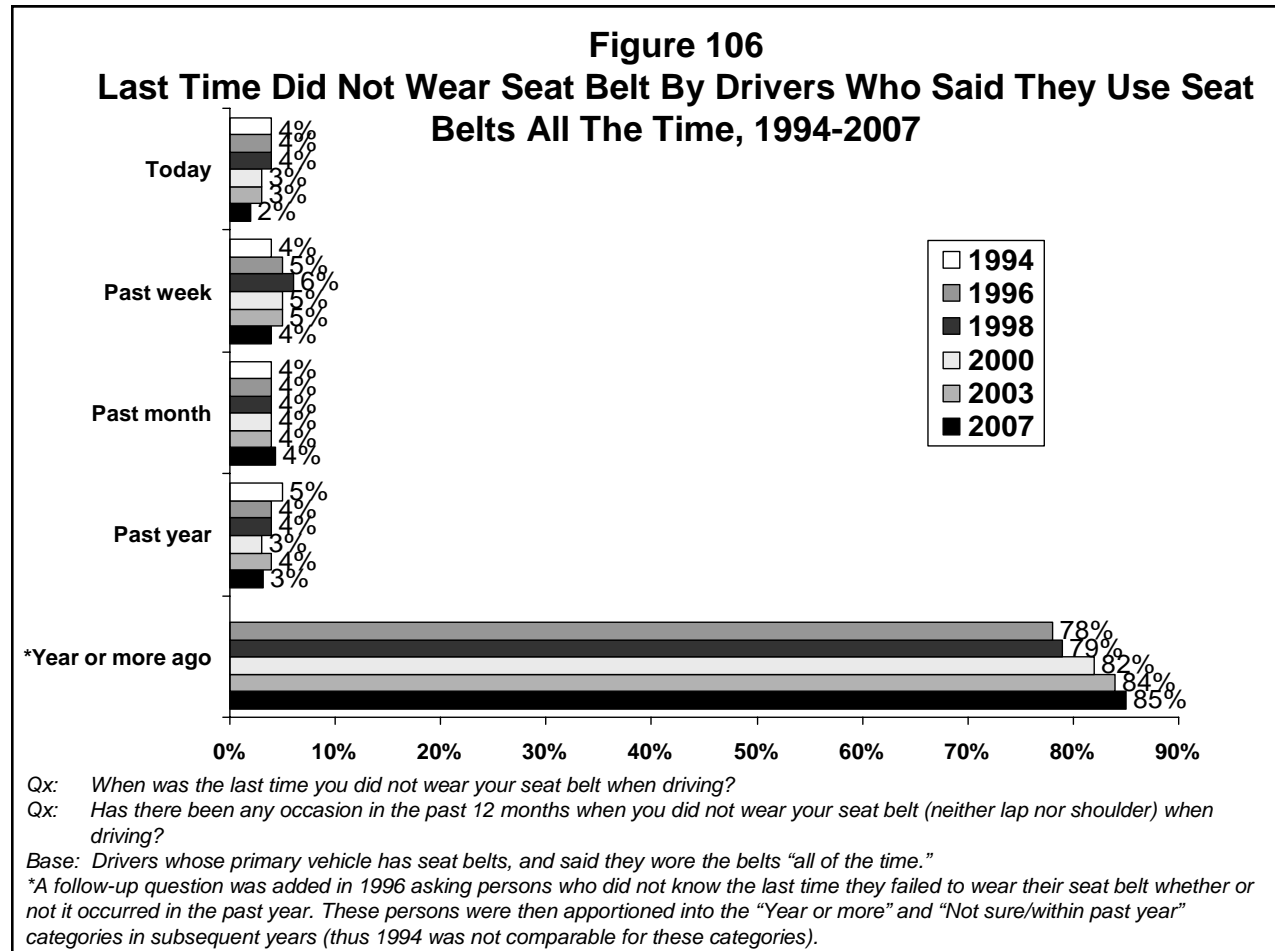
Drivers' Use Of Seat Belts, 1994-2007

The public is increasingly reporting that they use seat belts on a regular basis. The percentage of drivers age 16 and older who said that they always used their seat belt while driving has increased 14 percentage points since 1994, from 74% to 88%. This increase has largely come from most of the time and some of the time users, as the percentages of rare and never users has remained fairly stable over time (3% rarely used seat belts in 1994 versus 1% in 2007, 3% never used seat belts in 1994 versus 1% in 2007).



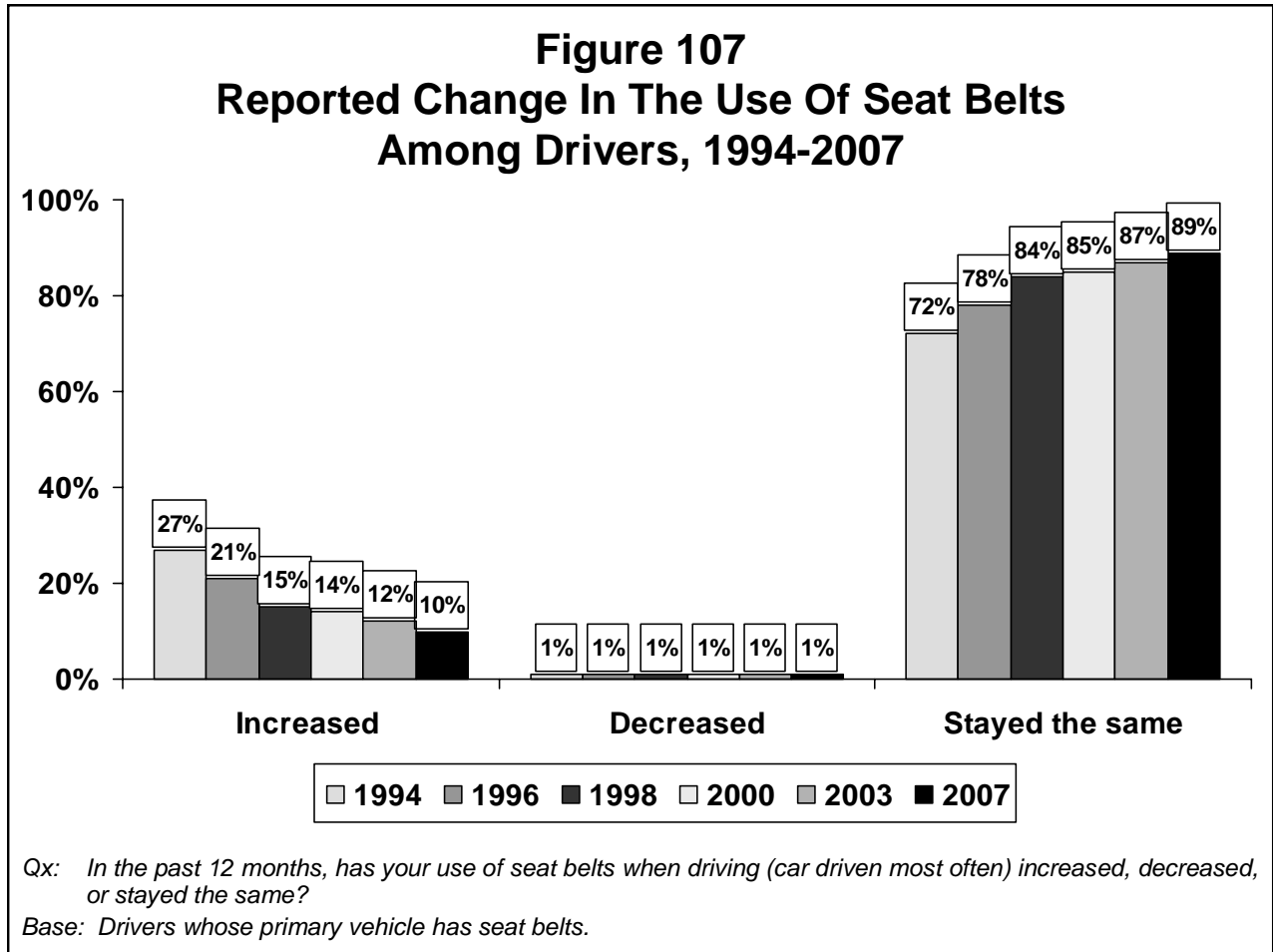
2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

Although more people reported using seat belts “all of the time” in 2007, a portion of these full-time users still indicated that they had not worn their seat belts recently while driving. On a follow-up question, 6% of the self-reported “all the time” belt users in 2007 indicated they had not used their seat belt at least once in the past day or week. Across previous years, the percentage had ranged from 7% to 10%.



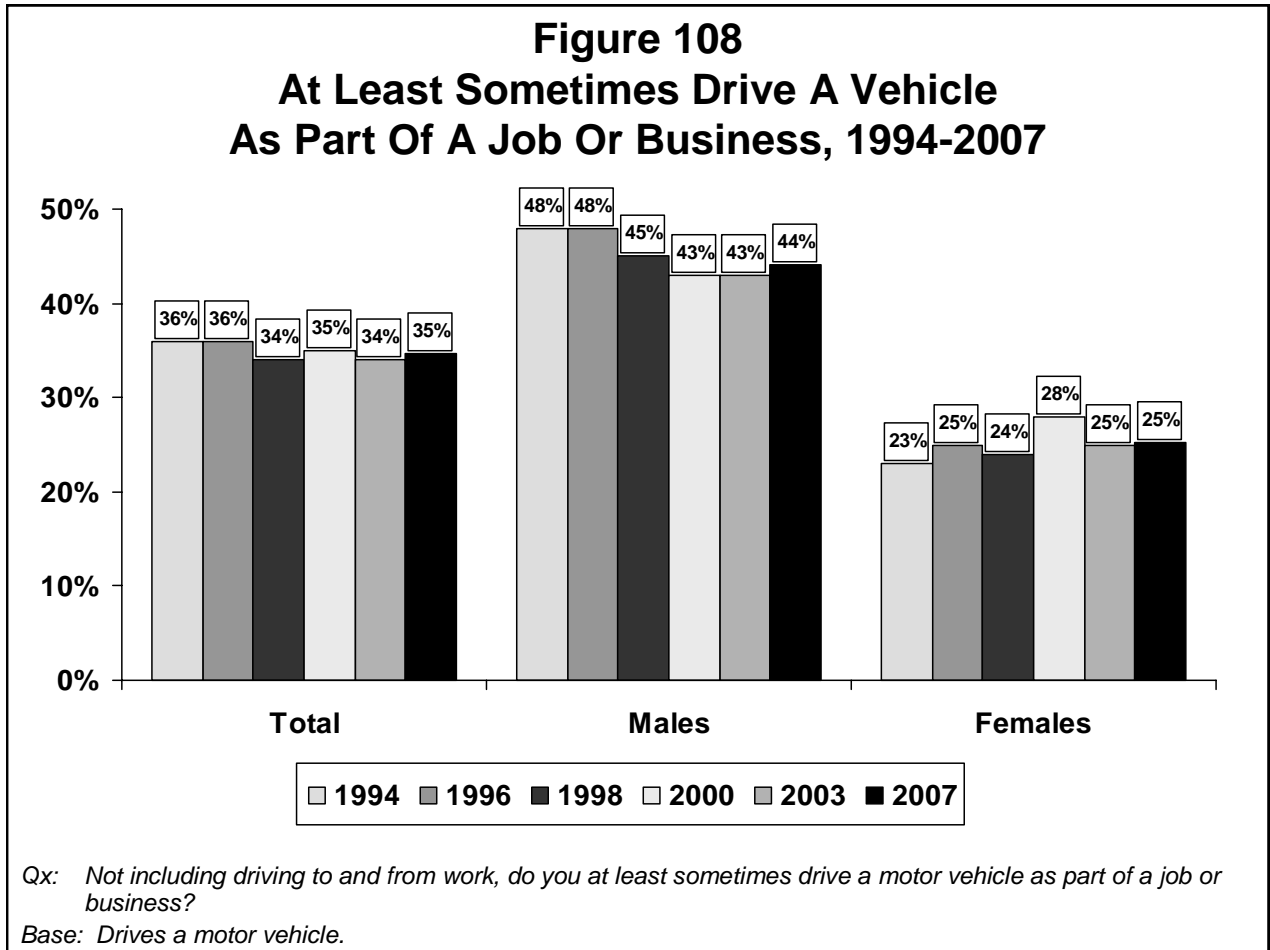
Reported Changes In Driver Seat Belt Use, 1994-2007

The percentage of drivers who said they increased their seat belt use over the past year has declined since 1994. In 1994, 27% of drivers reported that their use of seat belts while driving in the past twelve months had increased. Only 10% agreed with that statement in 2007.



Driving On The Job, 1994-2007

The overall percentage of drivers who drive on the job has remained fairly stable since 1994.



2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

Company Seat Belt Policy, 1994-2007

Drivers who said they drove on the job were asked if their company had a seat belt policy. If they answered “yes,” the interviewers then asked them if it was a written policy.

The percentage of drivers who reported a seat belt policy has changed very little since 2000.

Table 48
Company Seat Belt Policy – Written Or Unwritten, 1994-2007

Qx: *Does your company have a policy requiring seat belt use when driving on the job?*

Qx: *Is that a written policy?*

Base: *Drivers who drive on the job.*

	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
Company has policy	52%	53%	48%	55%	53%	56%
Yes, written policy	66%	67%	67%	62%	68%	64%
No, not a written policy	25%	24%	25%	28%	25%	24%
Not sure	9%	9%	8%	11%	7%	12%
Company doesn't have policy	43%	42%	45%	39%	41%	38%
Not sure if company has policy	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	7%

Frequency Of Front Seat Passenger Seat Belt Use, 1996-2007

In 1994, only respondents who said they usually sat in the front seat when riding as passengers were asked their frequency of seat belt use in that passenger seating position (the same approach was used for the back seat). The later surveys restructured this section so that everyone was asked their seat belt use for each seating position. In accordance with the restructuring, Table 49 compares reported seat belt use across years in the front passenger seat for all persons who ever ride as passengers, while omitting 1994 because the data are not comparable.

The 2007 data showed continuation of the pattern of rising seat belt use in the front passenger seat. There has been a 13 percentage point increase since 1996 in reported seat belt use for the front passenger seating position.

Table 49
Frequency Wear Seat Belt As Front Seat Passenger, 1996-2007

Qx: *How often do you ride as a passenger in any kind of car, van, or truck? Would you say almost every day, a few days a week, a few days a month, a few days a year, or never?*

Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the front seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *At least sometimes rides as a passenger.*

Frequency of front seat passenger seat belt use	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
All of the time	73%	74%	80%	83%	86%
Most of the time	14%	13%	10%	10%	8%
Some of the time	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%
Rarely	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%
Never	3%	4%	2%	2%	1%

2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

Frequency Of Back Seat Passenger Seat Belt Use, 1996-2007

Fifty-eight percent of passengers now report wearing seat belts all of the time while riding in the back seat, compared to 37% in 1996. Readers are reminded, however, that across all years, the vast majority of respondents usually sat in the front seat when riding as passengers.

Table 50
Frequency Wear Seat Belt As Back Seat Passenger, 1996-2007

Qx: *How often do you ride as a passenger in any kind of car, van, or truck? Would you say almost every day, a few days a week, a few days a month, a few days a year, or never?*

Qx: *When riding as a passenger in the back seat how often do you wear your seat belt?*

Base: *At least sometimes rides as a passenger.*

Frequency of back seat passenger seat belt use	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
All of the time	37%	43%	49%	53%	58%
Most of the time	14%	12%	13%	12%	11%
Some of the time	15%	11%	11%	8%	8%
Rarely	11%	9%	7%	8%	6%
Never	18%	17%	14%	13%	11%
Never ride in back	5%	7%	5%	6%	5%

Most Important Reason For Seat Belt Use By Drivers, 1994-2007

In 1994 and 1996 the interviewers read six potential reasons for seat belt use to the respondents. They asked the respondents which of the reasons applied to them (they could choose more than one, and could volunteer “other” reasons as well), and then asked which single reason did the respondent consider the most important. In 1998, two additional reasons were included on the list. This did not appreciably change the results as safety remained the predominant reason for wearing seat belts in 1998, 2000, 2003, and 2007. In 2003, a ninth item was added to the reasons for seat belt use, “A bell, buzzer or light reminds me.”

Table 51
Most Important Reason For Seat Belt Use:
Drivers, 1994-2007

Qx: When I wear my seat belt, I do so because...

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion wear their seat belt.

Reason	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
I want to avoid serious injury.	68%	68%	66%	64%	66%	64%
It's the law.	8%	8%	7%	9%	7%	9%
It's a habit.	7%	6%	6%	7%	6%	8%
I want to set a good example for others.	NA	NA	5%	5%	5%	5%
I don't want to get a ticket.	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%
I'm uncomfortable without it.	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Others want me to wear it.	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The people I'm with are wearing seat belts.	NA	NA	*	*	*	*
Vehicle has a bell, buzzer or light that reminds me	NA	NA	NA	NA	*	1%
Other	6%	7%	4%	6%	4%	2%
All important, can't select just one.	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%

*Less than 0.5%.

Most Important Reason For Non-Use Of Seat Belts By Drivers, 1994-2007

The interviewers approached the reasons for non-use in the same manner they did the reasons for use (described on the previous page). In most years, respondents were read eight reasons for non-use. In 2003, a ninth item was added to the reasons, “Don’t like being told what to do.” Another change over time was a revision in 1998 in wording for one item: “because of the people I am with” became “the people I am with are not wearing seat belts.” In 2007, respondents continued to most frequently cite riding a short distance (27%) and forgetting (22%) as their most important reasons for not wearing a belt.

Table 52
Most Important Reason For Not Wearing A Seat Belt:
Drivers, 1994-2007

Qx: Sometimes I do not wear my seat belt because...

Qx: Of the following reasons you just gave me for not wearing your seat belt, which is the most important?

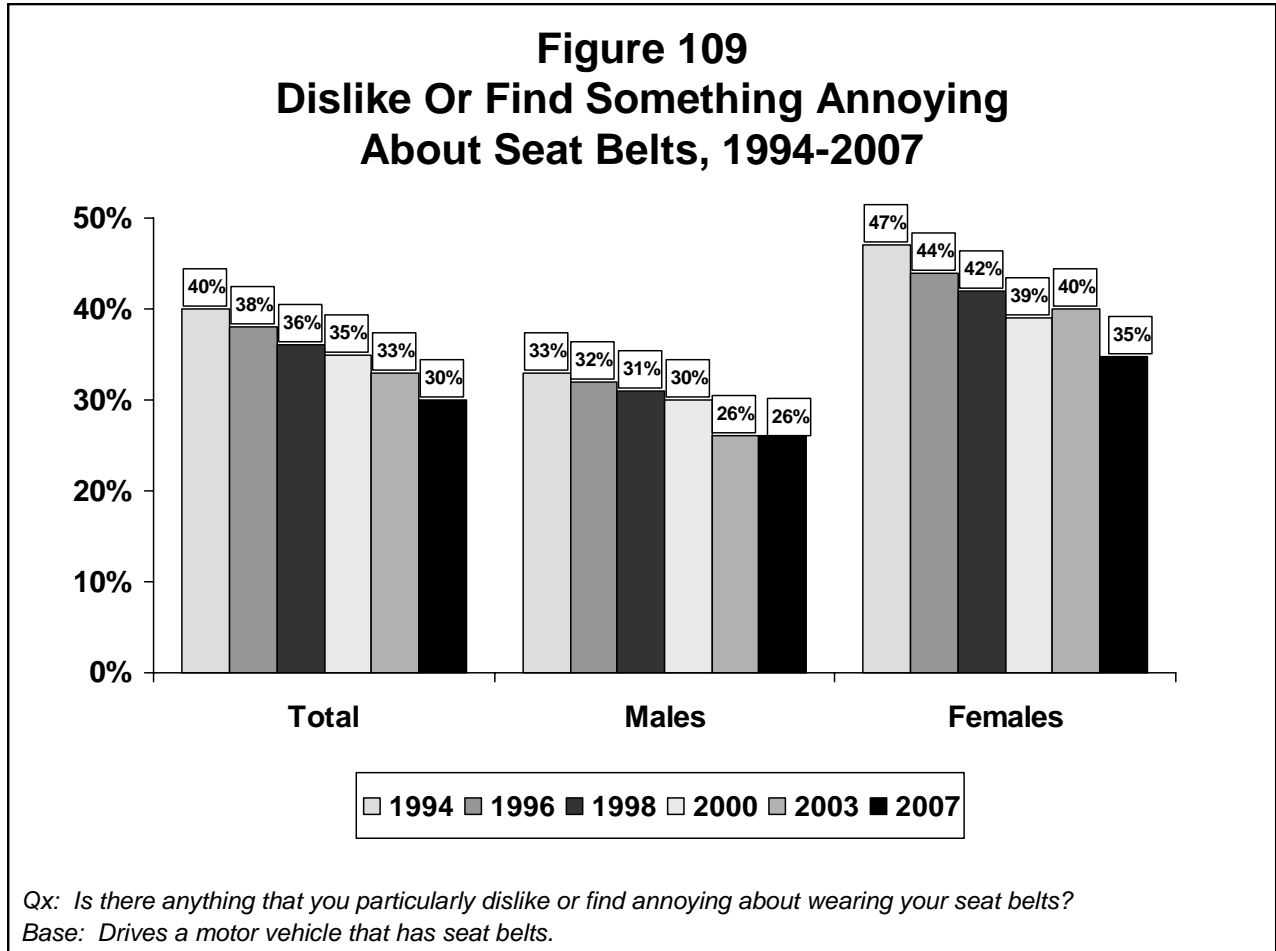
Base: Drivers whose primary vehicle has seat belts, and who at least on occasion do not wear their seat belt.

Reason	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2007
I forget to put it on.	24%	23%	24%	24%	25%	22%
I'm only driving a short distance.	17%	24%	22%	24%	23%	27%
The seat belt is uncomfortable.	10%	10%	12%	12%	13%	9%
I'm in a rush.	7%	7%	8%	9%	8%	7%
The probability of being in a crash is too low.	3%	4%	4%	4%	2%	4%
I'm driving in light traffic.	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
I don't want my clothes to get wrinkled.	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The people I'm with are not wearing seat belts.	1%	1%	1%	1%	*	1%
Don't like being told what to do	NA	NA	NA	NA	5%	5%
Other	7%	9%	7%	8%	4%	6%
None of these reasons.	22%	16%	17%	12%	13%	14%
All are important, can't select just one.	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%

*Less than 0.5%.

Drivers Who Dislike Or Find Something Annoying About Seat Belts, 1994-2007

All drivers regardless of whether or not they wore their seat belts regularly were asked if there was anything that they particularly disliked or found annoying about wearing their seat belt. Figure 109 shows a continued slow, steady decline in drivers' irritation with seat belts, particularly among female drivers.



Attitudes Concerning Fatalism And The Utility of Seat Belts, 1998-2007

The 1998 survey added a new section on attitudes related to the utility of seat belts, thus there currently are four points in time for comparisons. Table 53 shows little difference between the 2003 and 2007 numbers.

Table 53
Attitudes Concerning Risk Perception, Fatalism, And
The Usefulness Of Seat Belts, 1998-2007

Qx: Now I'm going to read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree.

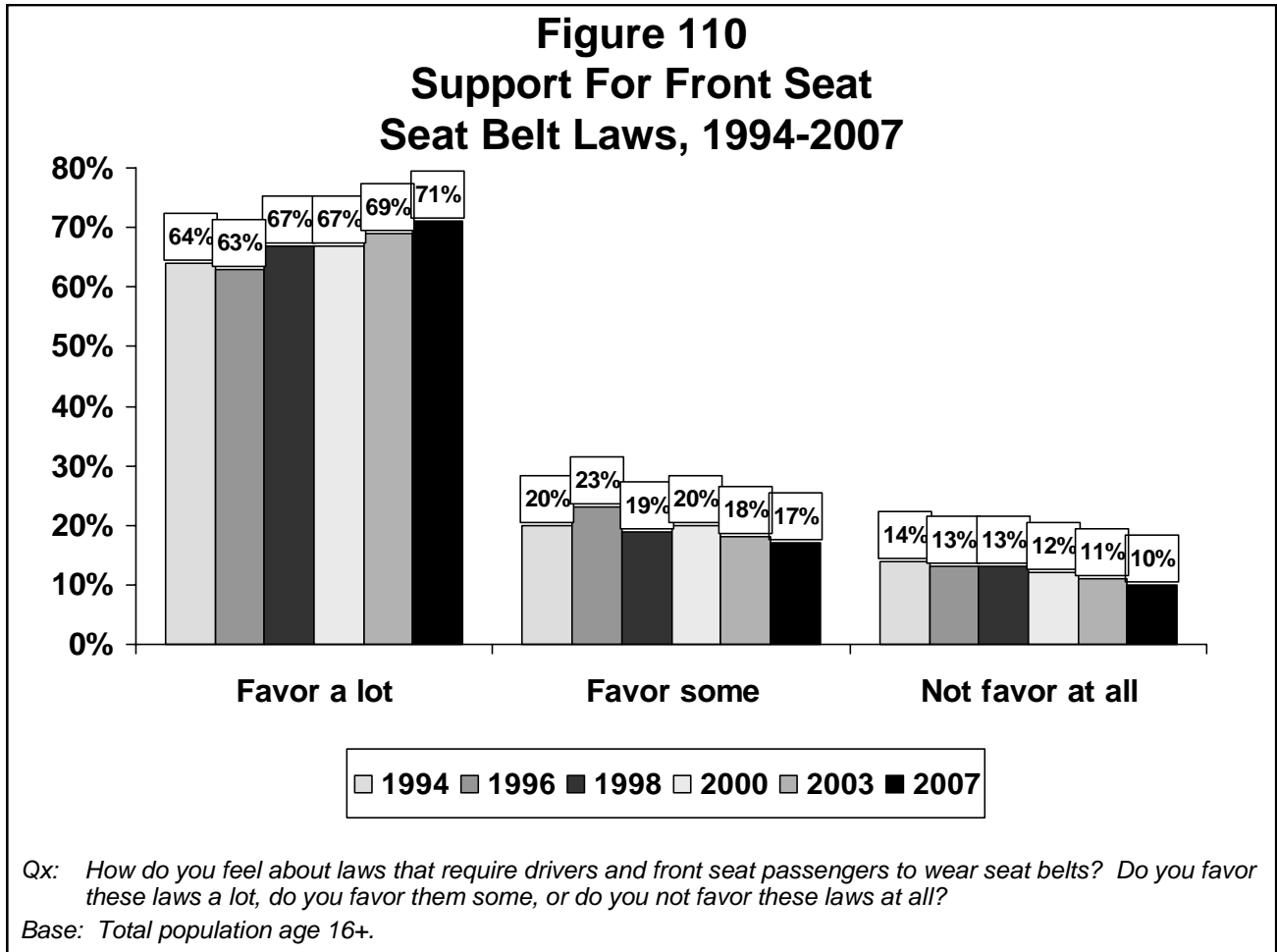
Qx: Do you agree or disagree that if it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.

Base: Total population age 16+.

	1998	2000	2003	2007
Strongly or somewhat agree with statement:				
Seat belts are just as likely to harm you as help you.	38%	36%	35%	34%
An accident close to home is usually not as serious as an accident farther away.	12%	14%	16%	16%
If I were in an accident, I would want to have my seat belt on.	93%	94%	95%	95%
Most motor vehicle accidents happen within five miles of home.	NA	NA	80%	80%
I would feel self-conscious around my friends if I wore a seat belt and they did not.	18%	19%	19%	21%
Putting on a seat belt makes me worry more about being in an accident.	15%	15%	15%	15%
Agree with statement:				
If it is your time to die, you'll die, so it doesn't matter whether you wear your seat belt.	28%	25%	26%	26%

Support For Seat Belt Laws That Apply To The Front Seat, 1994-2007

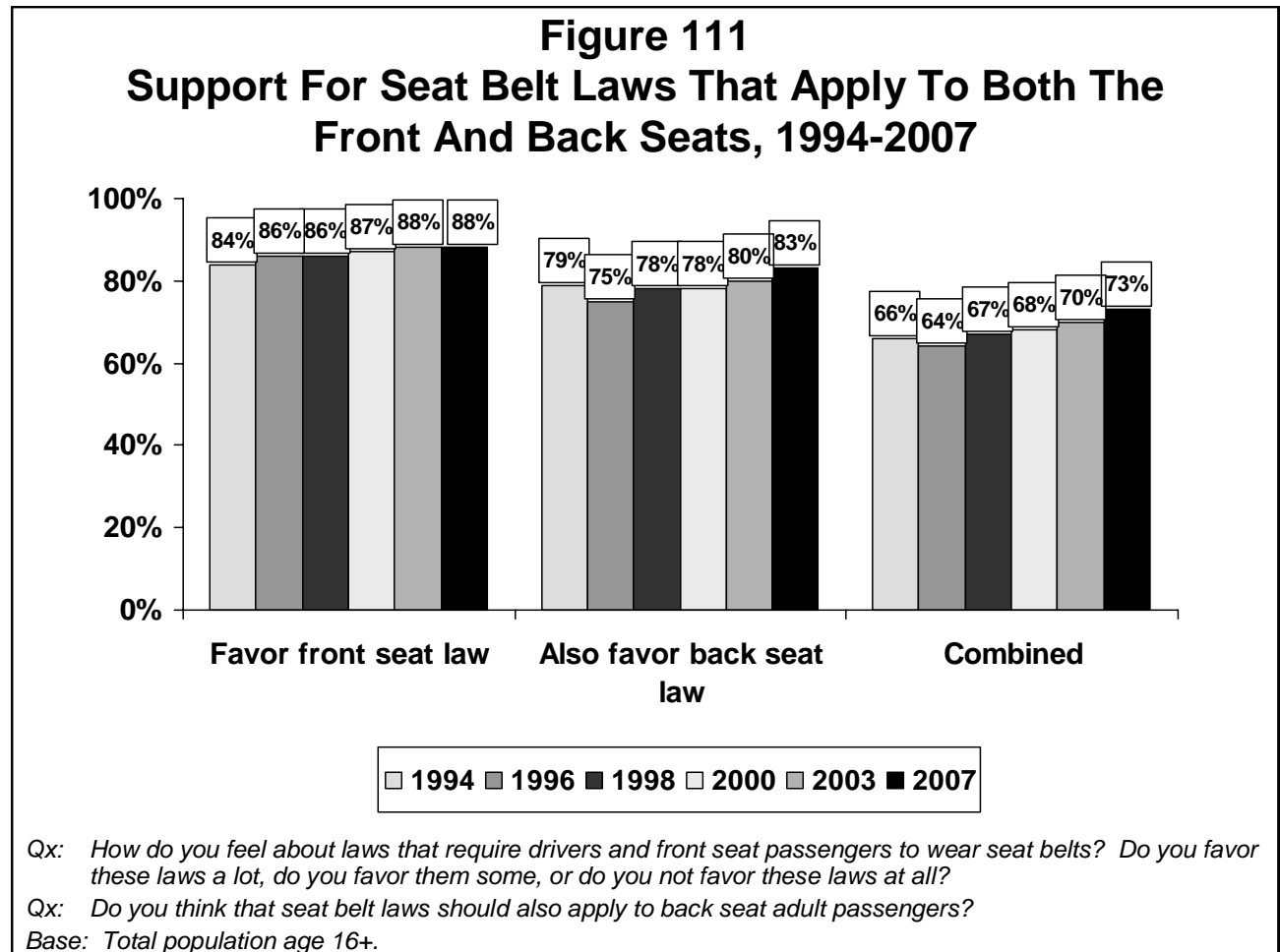
Seat belt laws have been enacted throughout the country to increase seat belt use. The 2007 survey found continued strong support for laws that applied to drivers and front seat passengers, as 88% favored such laws “a lot” or “some”. The 2003 figure was the same, 88%¹³.



¹³ The number does not equal the sum of the components in the Figure due to rounding.

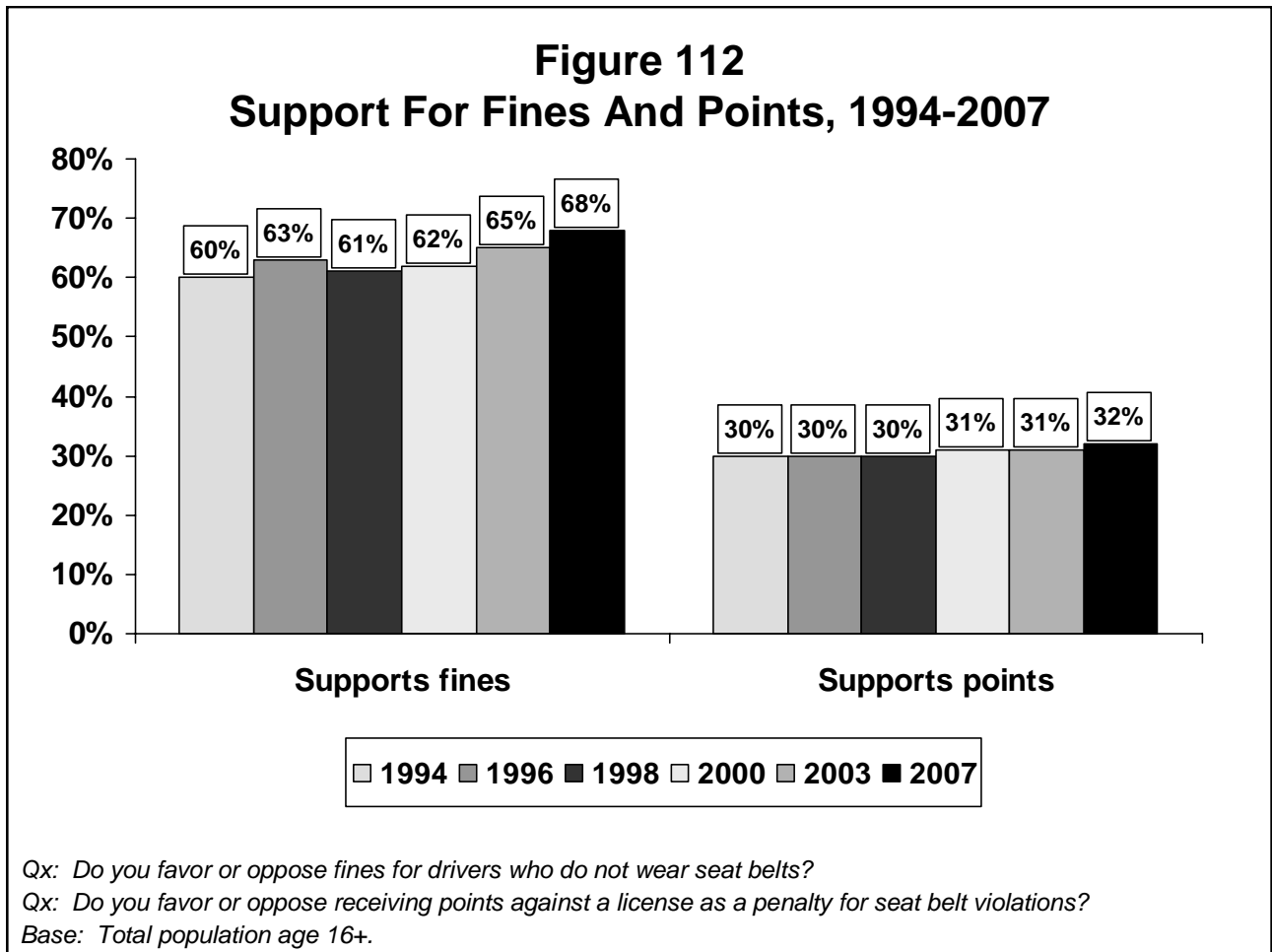
Support For Seat Belt Laws That Apply To Both The Front And Back Seats, 1994-2007

Of the 88% who favored front seat laws in 2007, 83% also favored having seat belt laws apply to the back seat, which translated into 73% who favored laws applicable to both the front and back seats. This compared to 70% in 2003, 68% in 1998, 67% in 1996 and 66% in 1994.



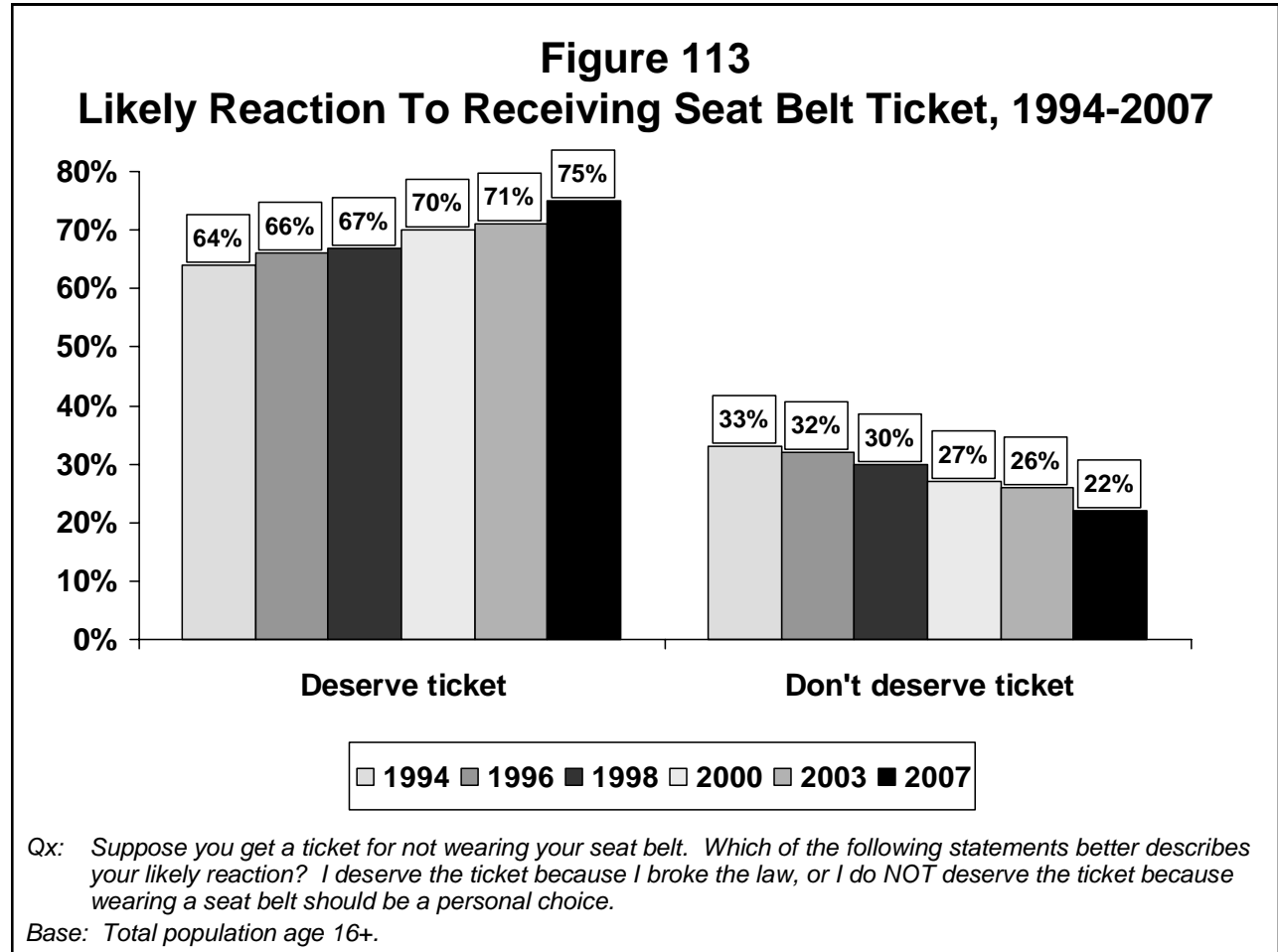
Support For Fines And Points, 1994-2007

The level of public support for fines reached 68% in 2007 while the support for points as sanctions for violating seat belt laws has largely stayed the same since 1994. More than twice as many persons support fines as support points.



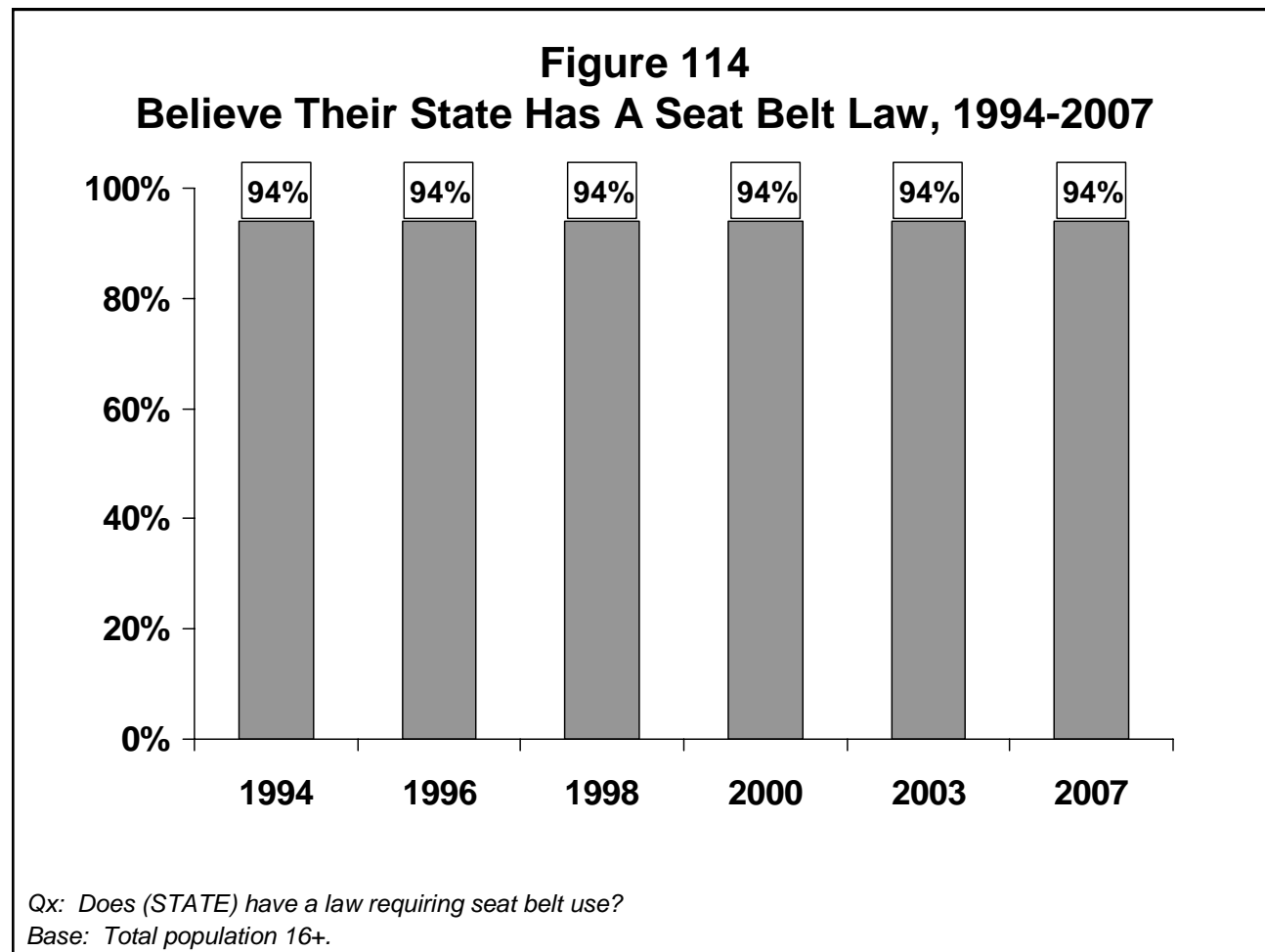
Likely Reaction To Receiving Seat Belt Ticket, 1994-2007

The interviewers asked the respondents which of the following would be their more likely reaction to receiving a seat belt ticket: that they deserved the ticket because they broke the law, or that they did not deserve the ticket because wearing a seat belt should be a personal choice. The 2007 survey found continued movement toward acceptance of the notion that the ticket would be deserved, as 75% agreed with that position.



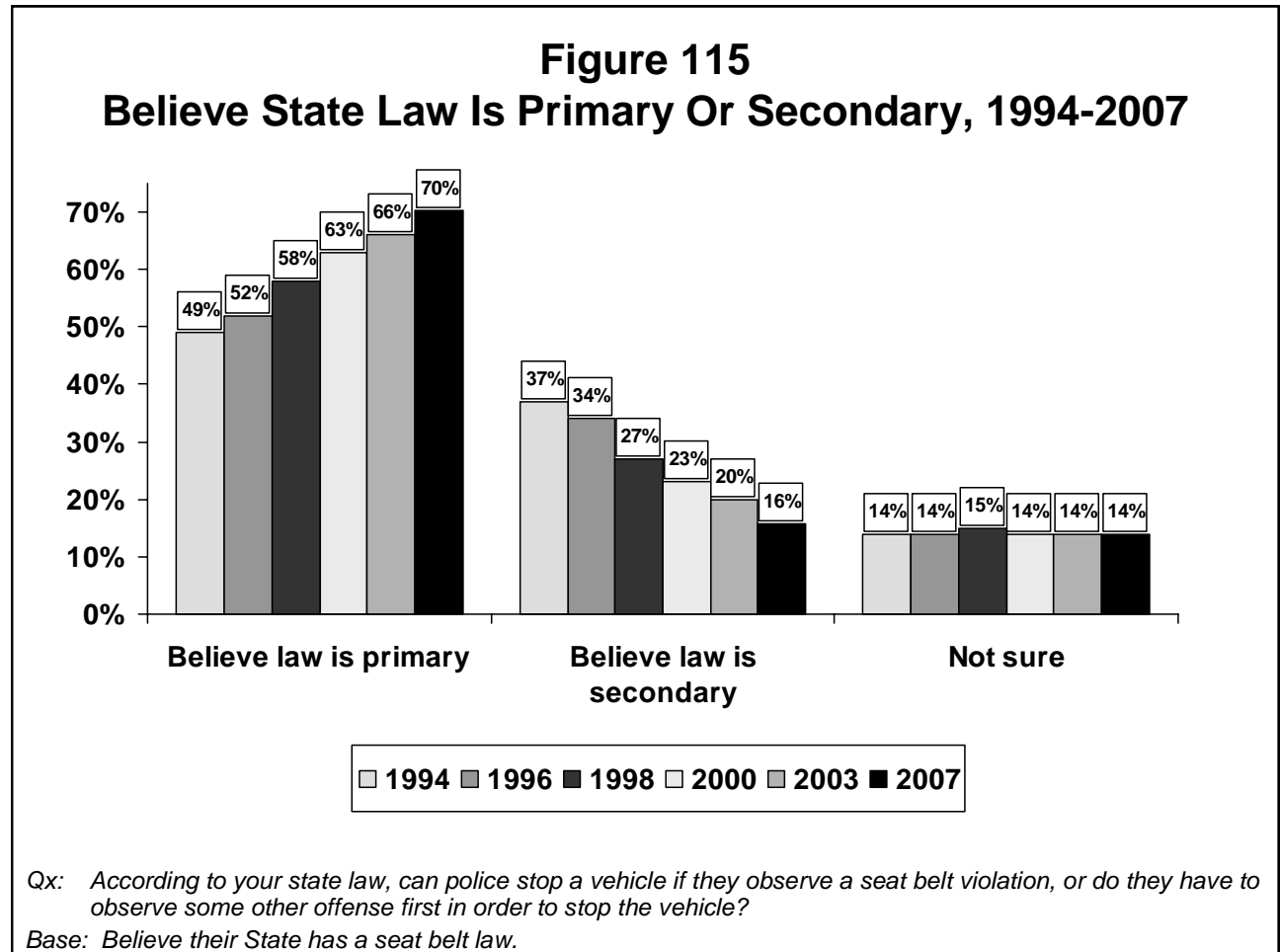
Believe Their State Has A Seat Belt Law, 1994-2007

The interviewers asked all respondents if their State had a law requiring seat belt use. The response did not change across the six administrations of the survey; 94% believed there was a seat belt law. During the 1994 survey, 47 States had seat belt laws that applied to adults. At the time of the 2007 survey, 49 States had such laws.



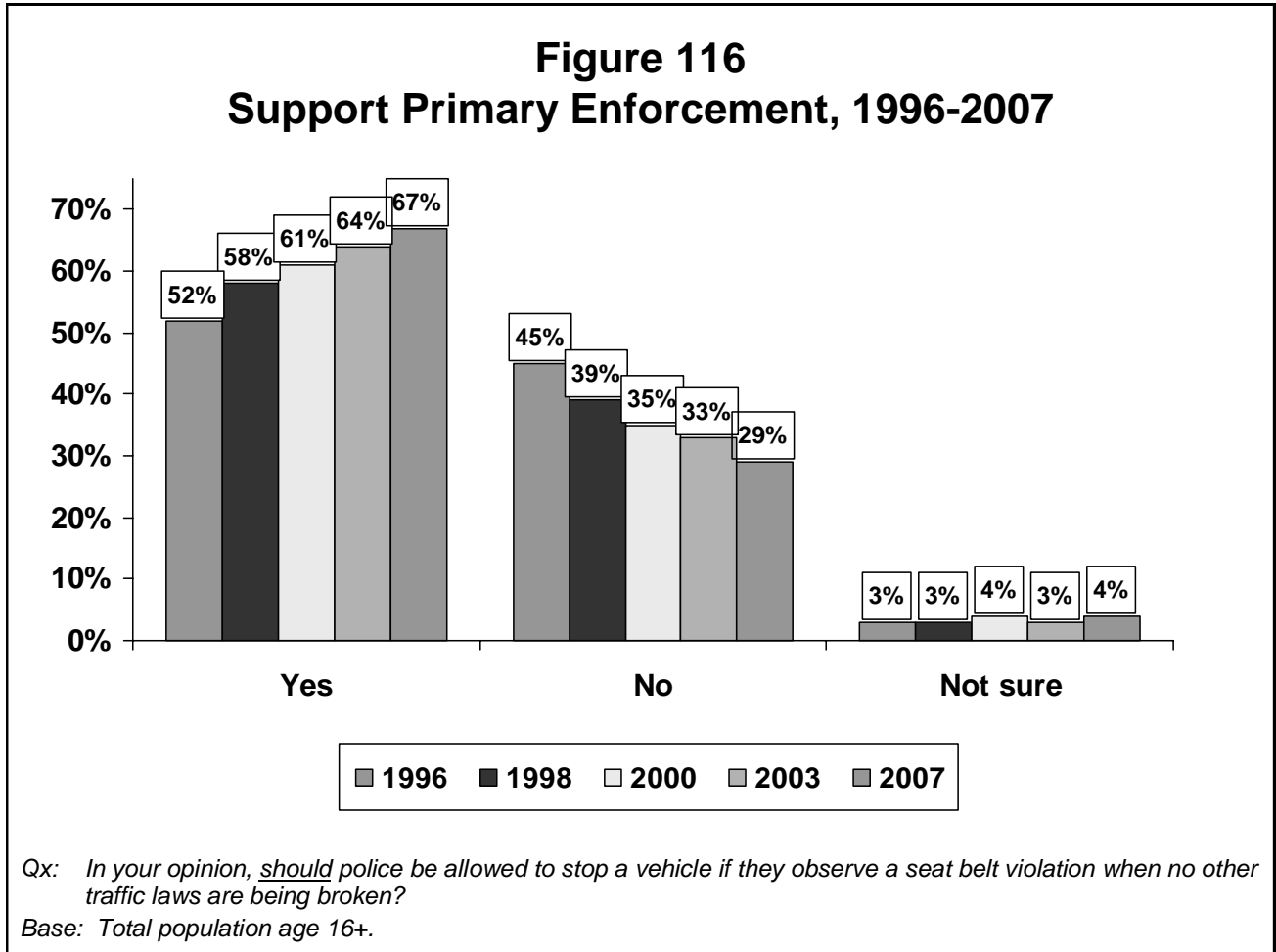
Knowledge Of Primary Versus Secondary Enforcement, 1994-2007

At the time of the 1994 survey, 9 States had seat belt laws that permitted primary enforcement, where law enforcement officers could stop a vehicle on the basis of observing a seat belt violation. The number increased to 11 in 1996, 14 in 1998, 17 in 2000, 18 in 2003 and 25 by the beginning of 2007. Over that period of time, there was an increase in the percentage of persons who believed their State law included primary enforcement provisions. Among persons who believed their State had a seat belt law, 70% thought the law provided for primary enforcement in 2007 compared to 49% in 1994.



Support For Primary Enforcement, 1996-2007

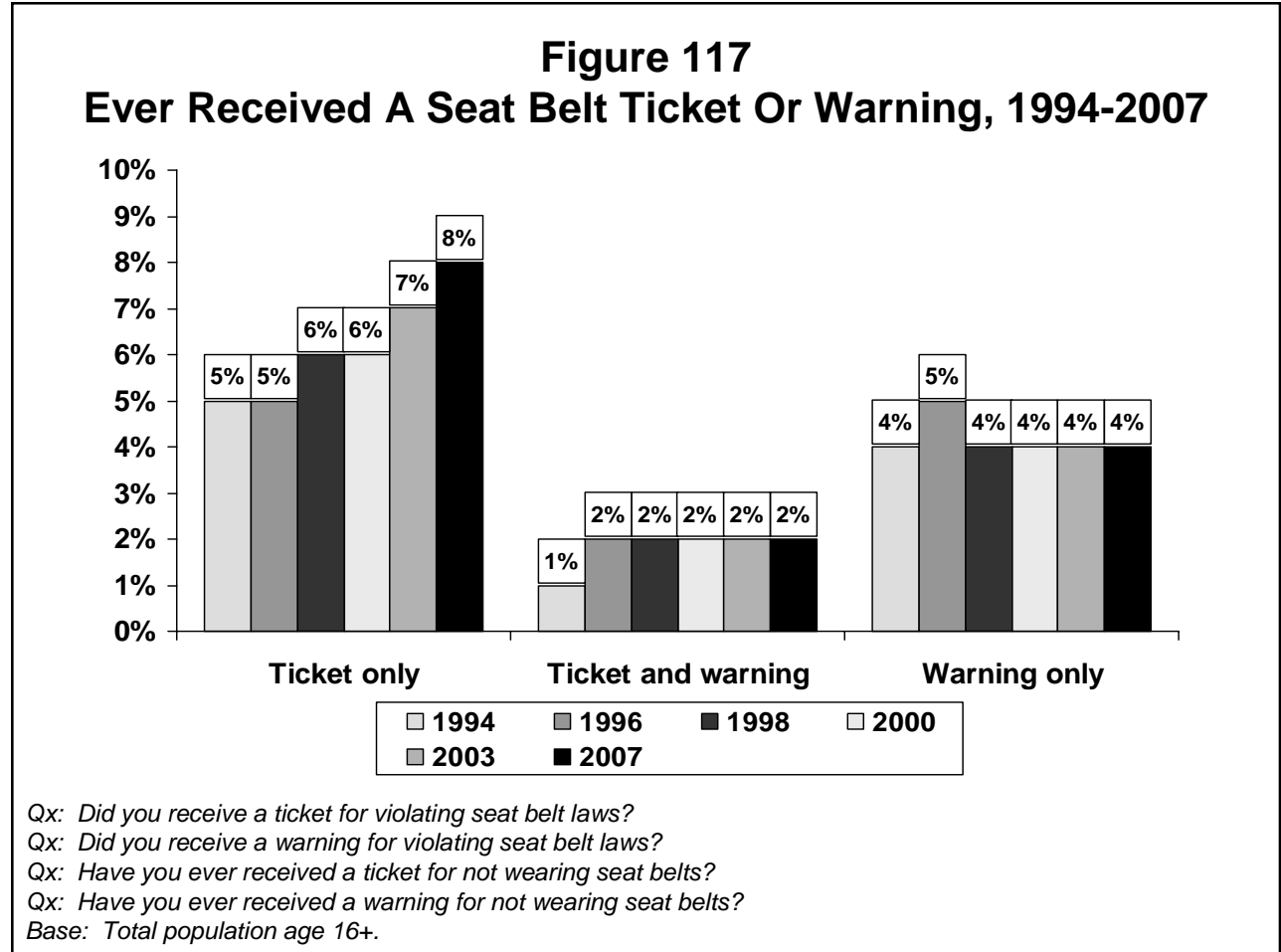
The 1996 survey introduced a question that asked if law enforcement officers should be allowed to stop a motor vehicle if they observed a seat belt violation but no other law was being broken. Barely half of the public, (52%) agreed at that time that police should have that authority. Support for the primary enforcement provision has increased by 15 percentage points since that time, reaching 67% in 2007.



2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

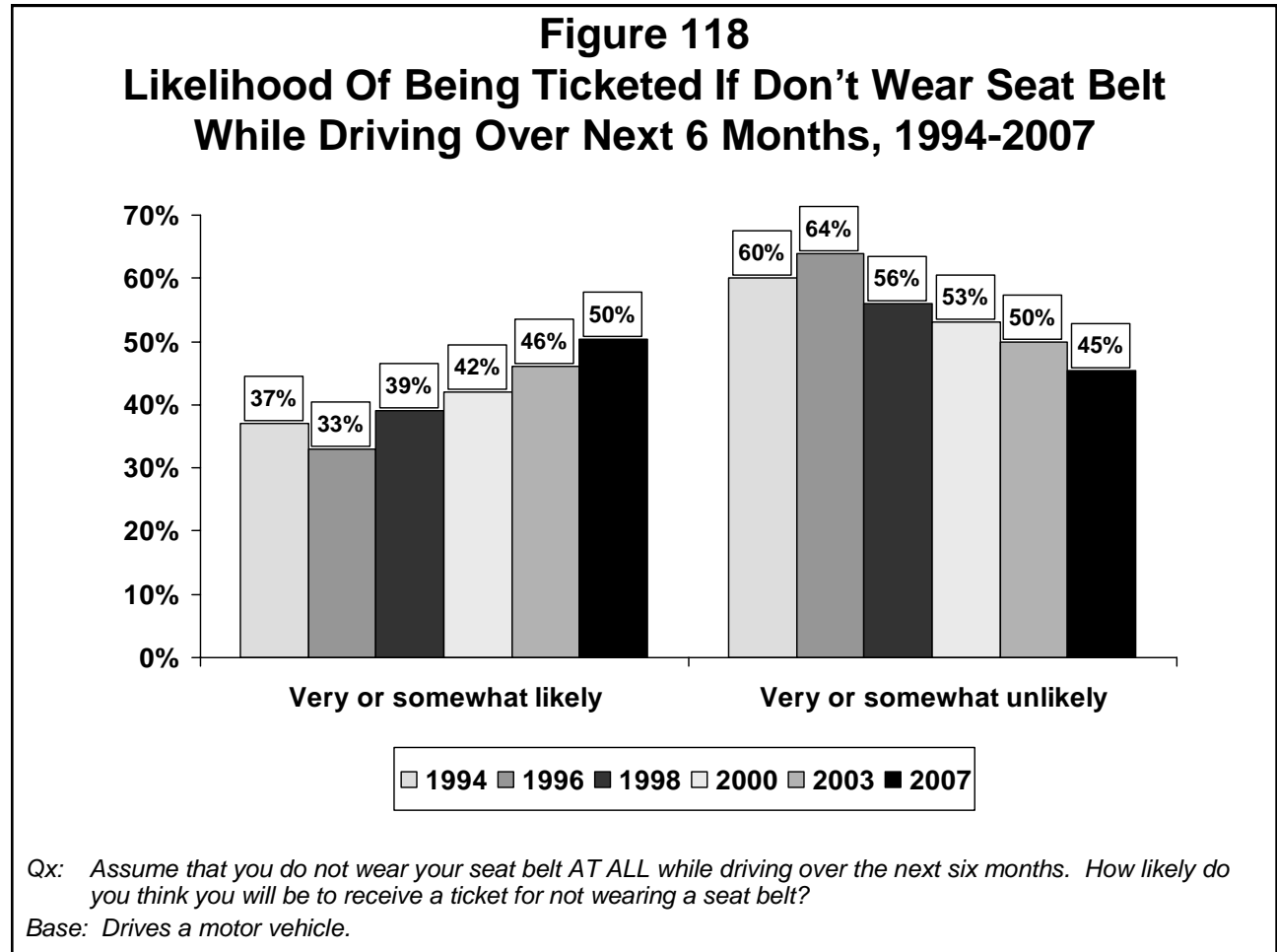
Ever Received A Seat Belt Ticket Or Warning, 1994-2007

The percentage of the population in 2007 who reported receiving a seat belt ticket and/or warning increased from 10% in 1994 to 14% in 2007.



Perceived Likelihood Of Being Ticketed, 1994-2007

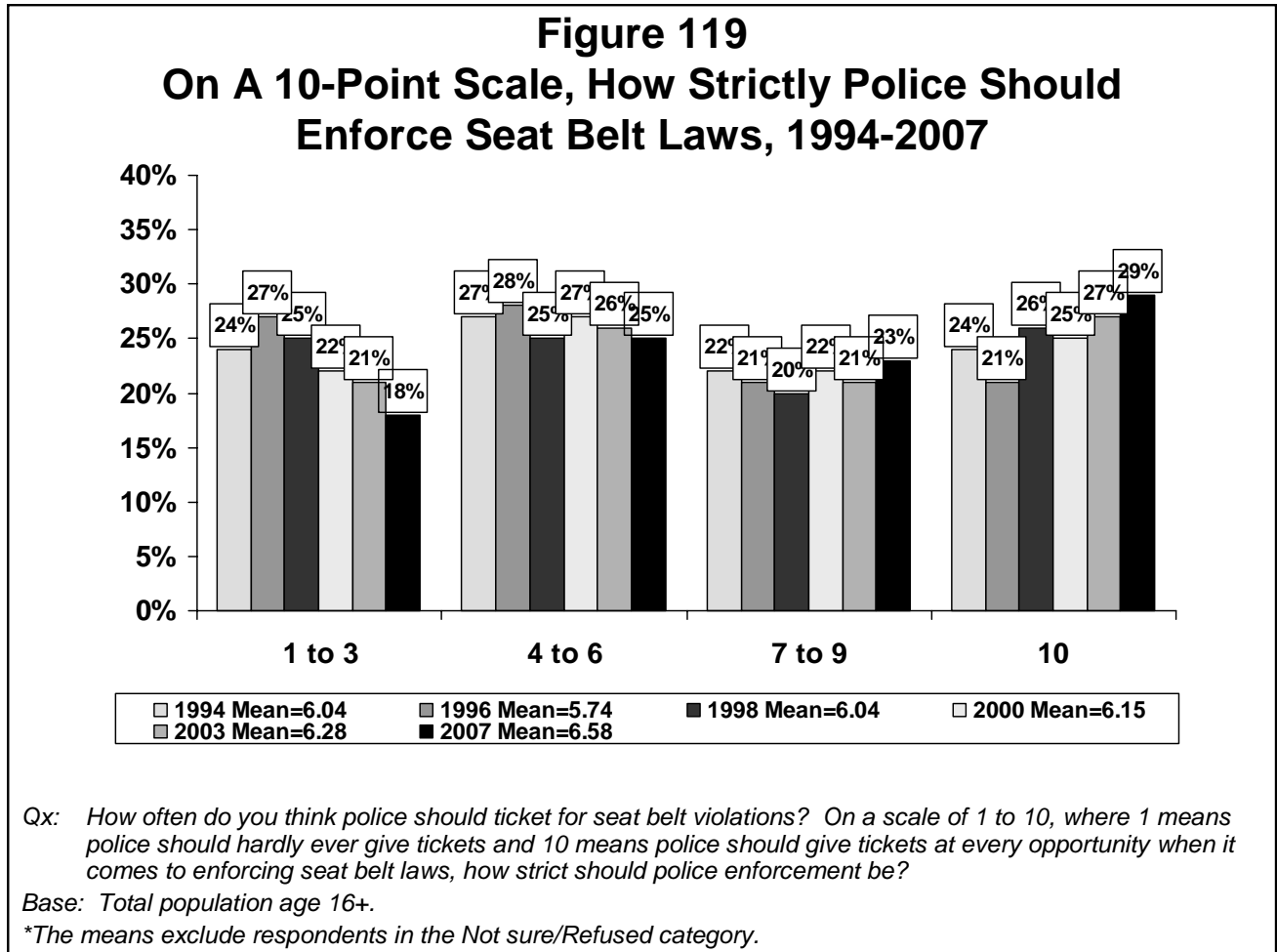
In 2007, more drivers than in the previous surveys (50%) believed that they were likely to receive a seat belt ticket if they did not wear a seat belt at all while driving over the next six months. However, almost one-half (45%) of the public still believed that they would probably not receive a ticket for violating the seat belt law.



2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

Level Of Support For Enforcing Seat Belt Laws, 1994-2007

The 2007 survey findings continued to show the public split on how strictly police should enforce seat belt laws.



2007 SURVEY RESULTS

APPENDIX A: *PRECISION OF SAMPLE ESTIMATES

***Reprinted from:**

Boyle, J. and C. Lampkin. 2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey. Volume I. Methodology Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Precision of Sample Estimates

The objective of the sampling procedures used on this study was to produce a random sample of the target population. A random sample shares the same properties and characteristics of the total population from which it is drawn, subject to a certain level of sampling error. This means that with a properly drawn sample we can make statements about the properties and characteristics of the total population within certain specified limits of certainty and sampling variability.

The confidence interval for sample estimates of population proportions, using simple random sampling without replacement, is calculated by the following formula:

$$p \pm z_{\alpha/2} \cdot SE(p) = p \pm z_{\alpha/2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{(p \cdot q)}{(n - 1)}}$$

Where:

- SE (p) = the standard error of the sample estimate for a proportion
- p = some proportion of the sample displaying a certain characteristic or attribute
- q = (1 - p)
- n = the size of the sample
- $z_{\alpha/2}$ = (1- α /2)-th percentile of the standard normal distribution (1.96 for 95% CI)

The sample sizes for the surveys are large enough to permit estimates for sub-samples of particular interest. Table 54, on the next page, presents the expected size of the sampling error for specified sample sizes of 12,000 and less, at different response distributions on a categorical variable. As the table shows, larger samples produce smaller expected sampling variances, but there is a constantly declining marginal utility of variance reduction per sample size increase.

TABLE 54
Expected Sampling Error (Plus or Minus)
At the 95% Confidence Level
(Simple Random Sample)

Percentage of the Sample or Sub-Sample Giving
 A Certain Response or Displaying a Certain
 Characteristic for Percentages Near:

<u>Size of Sample or Sub-Sample</u>	<u>10 or 90</u>	<u>20 or 80</u>	<u>30 or 70</u>	<u>40 or 60</u>	<u>50</u>
12,000	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9
6,000	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.3
4,500	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5
4,000	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.5	1.5
3,000	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.8
2,000	1.3	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.2
1,500	1.5	2.0	2.3	2.5	2.5
1,300	1.6	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.7
1,200	1.7	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.8
1,100	1.8	2.4	2.7	2.9	3.0
1,000	1.9	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.1
900	2.0	2.6	3.0	3.2	3.3
800	2.1	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.5
700	2.2	3.0	3.4	3.6	3.7
600	2.4	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.0
500	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.4
400	2.9	3.9	4.5	4.8	4.9
300	3.4	4.5	5.2	5.6	5.7
200	4.2	5.6	6.4	6.8	6.9
150	4.8	6.4	7.4	7.9	8.0
100	5.9	7.9	9.0	9.7	9.8
75	6.8	9.1	10.4	11.2	11.4
50	8.4	11.2	12.8	13.7	14.0

NOTE: Entries are expressed as percentage points (+ or -)

2007 Motor Vehicle Occupant Safety Survey: Seat Belt Report

However, the sampling design for this study included a separate, concurrently administered over-sample of youth and young adults (age 16-39). Both the cross-sectional sample and the over-sample of the youth/younger adult population were drawn as simple random samples; however, the disproportionate sampling of the age 16-39 population introduces a design effect that makes it inappropriate to assume that the sampling error for total sample estimates will be identical to those of a simple random sample.

In order to calculate a specific interval for estimates from a sample, the appropriate statistical formula for calculating the allowance for sampling error (at a 95% confidence interval) in a stratified sample with a disproportionate design is:

$$ASE = 1.96 \sqrt{\sum_{h=1}^g \left[W_h^2 \left\{ (1 - f_h) \left(\frac{s_h^2}{n_h} \right) \right\} \right]}$$

where:

- ASE = allowance for sampling error at the 95% confidence level;
- h = a stratum;
- g = number of strata;
- W_h = proportion of stratum h to total population (N_h/N);
- f_h = sampling fraction in stratum h – sample size divided by population size in stratum h (n_h/N_h);
- n_h = the sample size for the stratum h.
- s_h^2 = sample variance in stratum h – for proportions, this is equal to $\frac{n_h}{n_h - 1} p_h (1 - p_h)$

Although Table 54 above provides a useful approximation of the magnitude of expected sampling error, precise calculation of allowances for sampling error requires the use of this formula. To assess the design effect for sample estimates, we calculated sampling errors for the disproportionate sample for a number of key variables using the above formula. These estimates were then compared to the sampling errors for the same variables, assuming a simple random sample of the same size. The two strata (h_1 and h_2) in the disproportionate sample were all respondents age 16-39 and all respondents age 40 and over respectively. The proportion for the 16-39 year old stratum (w_1) was 42.2 percent while the proportion for the 40 and over stratum (w_2) was 57.8 percent.

As shown in Table 55, the disproportionate sampling increases the confidence interval for total sample estimates by an average of 17.1 percent, compared to a simple random sample of the same size. This means the sample design decreases the sampling precision for total population estimates somewhat, while increasing the precision of sampling estimates for the sub-sample aged 16-39 years old. Since the maximum difference in the point estimate between the stratified disproportionate sample and a simple random sample is less than .34 of a percentage point, the sampling error table for a simple random sample will provide a reasonable approximation of the precision of sampling estimates in the survey.

TABLE 55
Design Effect on Confidence Intervals for Sample Estimates
Between Disproportionate Sample Used in Occupant Protection Survey
and a Proportionate Sample of Same Size

----- CONFIDENCE INTERVALS -----
 PERCENTAGE POINTS \pm AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL

VARIABLE (Version 1 only)	p=	HYPOTHETICAL PROPORTIONATE SAMPLING*	CURRENT DIS- PROPORTIONATE SAMPLING	DIFFERENCE IN CONFIDENCE INTERVALS
<i>Driven in the past year</i>	89.3%	0.79	0.89	12.7%
<i>Drank alcohol in past year</i>	61.2%	1.24	1.42	14.5%
<i>Always use seat belt (N=5252)</i>	75.1%	1.17	1.37	17.1%
<i>Dislike seat belts (N=5258)</i>	30.4%	1.17	1.39	18.8%
<i>Always use passenger belt (N=5376)</i>	85.7%	0.93	1.11	19.4%
<i>Favor (a lot) seat belt laws</i>	71.4%	1.15	1.32	14.8%
<i>Should be primary enforcement</i>	67.3%	1.19	1.38	16.0%
<i>Ever ticketed by police for seatbelt</i>	9.4%	0.74	0.91	23.0%
<i>Ever injured in vehicle accident</i>	26.3%	1.12	1.28	14.3%
<i>Drives a car for work almost every day</i>	52.3%	2.27	2.61	15.0%
<i>Set a good example for others (N=5192) (reason for using seat belts)</i>	77.8%	1.12	1.28	14.3%
<i>Driver-side air bag in vehicle (N=4755)</i>	99.0%	0.28	0.33	17.9%
<i>Race: Black/African American</i>	9.9%	0.76	0.89	17.1%
<i>Ethnicity: Hispanic</i>	13.4%	0.87	1.1	26.4%
<i>Gender: Male</i>	48.4%	1.27	1.46	15.0%
AVERAGE DIFFERENCE IN CONFIDENCE INTERVALS				17.1%
Total sample proportions using SRS formula				
Unless specified otherwise N=5908				

Estimating Statistical Significance

The estimates of sampling precision presented in the previous section yield confidence bands around the sample estimates, within which the true population value should lie. This type of sampling estimate is appropriate when the goal of the research is to estimate a population distribution parameter. However, the purpose of some surveys is to provide a comparison of population parameters estimated from independent samples (e.g. annual tracking surveys) or between subsets of the same sample. In such instances, the question is not simply whether or not there is any difference in the sample statistics that estimate the population parameter, but rather is the difference between the sample estimates statistically significant (i.e., beyond the expected limits of sampling error for both sample estimates).

To test whether or not a difference between two sample proportions is statistically significant, a rather simple calculation can be made. The maximum expected sampling error (i.e., confidence interval in the previous formula) of the first sample is designated $s1$ and the maximum expected sampling error of the second sample is $s2$. The sampling error of the difference between these estimates is sd and is calculated as:

$$sd = \sqrt{(s1^2 + s2^2)}$$

Any difference between observed proportions that exceeds sd is a statistically significant difference at the specified confidence interval. Note that this technique is mathematically equivalent to generating standardized tests of the difference between proportions.

An illustration of the pooled sampling error between sub-samples for various sizes is presented in Table 56. This table can be used to determine the size of the difference in proportions between drivers and non-drivers or other sub-samples that would be statistically significant.

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TABLE 56. Pooled Sampling Error Expressed as Percentages for Given Sample Sizes (Assuming P=Q)

Sample Size																		
4000	14.1	10.0	7.1	5.9	5.1	4.7	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.0	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.2	
3500	14.1	10.0	7.1	5.9	5.2	4.7	4.3	4.1	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.0	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3		
3000	14.1	10.0	7.2	5.9	5.2	4.7	4.4	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.5			
2500	14.1	10.0	7.2	6.0	5.3	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.0	3.8	3.7	3.2	2.9	2.8				
2000	14.2	10.1	7.3	6.1	5.4	4.9	4.6	4.3	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.3	3.1					
1500	14.2	10.2	7.4	6.2	5.5	5.1	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.6						
1000	14.3	10.3	7.6	6.5	5.8	5.4	5.1	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.4							
900	14.4	10.4	7.7	6.5	5.9	5.5	5.2	4.9	4.8	4.6								
800	14.4	10.4	7.8	6.6	6.0	5.6	5.3	5.1	4.9									
700	14.5	10.5	7.9	6.8	6.1	5.7	5.5	5.2										
600	14.6	10.6	8.0	6.9	6.3	5.9	5.7											
500	14.7	10.8	8.2	7.2	6.6	6.2												
400	14.8	11.0	8.5	7.5	6.9													
300	15.1	11.4	9.0	8.0														
200	15.6	12.1	9.8															
100	17.1	13.9																
50	19.8																	
	50	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	
Sample Size																		

2007 SURVEY RESULTS

**APPENDIX B: STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY LAWS
AT TIME OF SURVEY**

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TABLE 57			
Key Provisions of State Highway Safety Laws at Time of Survey			
STATE	ENFORCEMENT	FINE	Seating Positions Covered
ALABAMA	Primary	\$25	Front
ALASKA	Primary	\$15	All
ARIZONA	Secondary	\$10	Front
ARKANSAS	Secondary	\$25	Front
CALIFORNIA	Primary	\$20	All
COLORADO	Secondary	\$17	Front
CONNECTICUT	Primary	\$15	Front
DELAWARE	Primary	\$25	All
DIST. OF COLUMBIA	Primary	\$50	All
FLORIDA	Secondary	\$30	Front
GEORGIA	Primary	\$15-25	Front
HAWAII	Primary	\$55	Front
IDAHO	Secondary	\$10	All
ILLINOIS	Primary	\$25	Front
INDIANA	Primary	\$25	Front
IOWA	Primary	\$25	Front
KANSAS	Secondary	\$10	Front
KENTUCKY	Primary	\$25	All
LOUISIANA	Primary	\$25	Front
MAINE	Secondary	\$25-50	All
MARYLAND	Primary	\$25	Outboard Front
MASSACHUSETTS	Secondary	\$25	All
MICHIGAN	Primary	\$25	Front
MINNESOTA	Secondary	\$25	Front
MISSISSIPPI	Primary	\$25	Front
MISSOURI	Secondary	\$10	Front
MONTANA	Secondary	\$20	All
NEBRASKA	Secondary	\$25	Front
NEVADA	Secondary	\$25	All
NEW HAMPSHIRE	No adult law	\$25	<18 only All
NEW JERSEY	Primary	\$20	Front
NEW MEXICO	Primary	\$25	All
NEW YORK	Primary	\$50-100	Front
NORTH CAROLINA	Primary	\$25	Front
NORTH DAKOTA	Secondary	\$20	Front
OHIO	Secondary	\$30	Front
OKLAHOMA	Primary	\$20	Front
OREGON	Primary	\$75	All
PENNSYLVANIA	Secondary	\$10	Front
RHODE ISLAND	Secondary	\$75	All
SOUTH CAROLINA	Primary	\$25	All
SOUTH DAKOTA	Secondary	\$20	Front
TENNESSEE	Primary	\$10	Front
TEXAS	Primary	\$25-50	Front
UTAH	Secondary	\$45	All
VERMONT	Secondary	\$25	All
VIRGINIA	Secondary	\$25	Front
WASHINGTON	Primary	\$35	All
WEST VIRGINIA	Secondary	\$25	Front
WISCONSIN	Secondary	\$10	Front
WYOMING	Secondary	\$25	All

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