

AAA Clubs of New Jersey Legislative Contacts

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AAA, an Overview

AAA is a not-for-profit, fully tax-paying federation of 56 automobile clubs and full-service travel agencies with more than 51 million members in the United States and Canada.

Our Federation's 106-year history of advocacy, service to motorists and travelers, and developing new products and expanding services for members continues today. Since our founding, AAA's priority has been safety and mobility, security and peace of mind for our members and the general traveling public.

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey

In New Jersey alone, AAA is more than two million members strong, accounting for one of every three licensed Garden State drivers. The Clubs provide travel, automotive, insurance and financial services.

The four AAA Clubs of New Jersey headquarters are:

- AAA Mid-Atlantic, Eastern Region - Hamilton, Mercer County
- AAA New Jersey Automobile Club - Florham Park, Morris County
- AAA North Jersey - Wayne, Passaic County
- AAA South Jersey - Voorhees, Camden County

Nationwide Emergency Road Service AAA

Clubs respond to more than 31 million emergency road service calls annually. Our ERS staff is on the job 24-hours a day, seven days a week providing battery and tire service, towing, lock outs, gas delivery and more.



Personalized Auto Travel Planning

AAA's TripTiks® are personalized travel itineraries that detail mileage, drive time and highway conditions, such as active construction and related detours. Each year, AAA publishes and distributes more than:

- 16 million TripTiks®
- 21 million AAA TourBooks®
- 1.5 million Campbook® guides
- 30 million road maps

These publications list more than 14,000 points of interest and 37,000 accommodations and restaurants, each rated annually by AAA's 60-member, full-time inspection staff. This information is available online at AAA.com and AAAmaps.com.

Travel Agency Services

The largest leisure travel organization in North America, AAA has more than 1,000 accredited, full-service travel agencies staffed by 11,000 travel professionals. Exclusive member discounts are available through AAA partnerships with Disney, Universal Studios, Amtrak and Hertz, among others; and, through affiliated motoring clubs in more than 120 countries, which provide lodging, dining and roadside assistance discounts to members.

Show Your Card & Save® Program

AAA and local, national and international vendors, restaurants and attractions partner to provide members with exclusive discounts through the Show Your Card & Save® program, which has saved members nearly \$3 billion since its inception.

Insurance

AAA provides auto, homeowner's, health, life and other business and personal lines of insurance (varies by Club), as well as travel accident coverage and trip-cancellation coverage through AAA travel agencies.

Financial Services

Participating Clubs provide an array of competitively priced products and services, such as auto loans and leases, FDIC-insured money market accounts, flexible home equity loans and lines of credit, as well as fixed and adjustable rate mortgages. In partnership with Bank of America, AAA offers several Visa cards with exclusive member-only rates, rewards and benefits.

Legislative and Community Services

AAA leadership in developing, implementing and supporting driver and traffic safety programs is unmatched. These programs reach motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and children. Our commitment, at all levels of government, emphasizes transportation funding and focuses on teen drivers, child passenger safety, driver distractions, senior mobility, impaired driving and many other safety initiatives. AAA's significant investments in the community include various educational materials for schools and police departments, businesses and community groups.



AAA's School Safety Patrol was created in 1920. Today, it safeguards millions of students nationwide and is as familiar to motorists as the stop sign.

A Message from the Chairman

There is no greater issue, no greater requirement in AAA's opinion, than New Jersey's need to solve its transportation funding crisis – once and for all.

The AAA Club's of New Jersey are not alone in this belief; nor is New Jersey alone in facing such transportation demands. Indeed, nearly every state's transportation system faces an uncertain, unfunded future. However, this is true in our state more so than any other.

Our Transportation Trust Fund is in the "ditch" and the estimated cost of inspecting, repairing or replacing our bridges and other surface transportation needs is estimated to cost more than \$40 billion. We simply don't have the funds to meet these obligations.

Simply put, New Jersey can't afford to fix what happens to be broken.

In a nut shell, roads and bridges throughout our state ache for attention, yet year after year we ignore these demands and do absolutely nothing to counteract this ongoing dilemma. Our proposition is simple: It's time for intelligent debate concerning an immediate and equitable solution on these matters among our elected officials on both sides of the aisle. It's time for the citizens of the state to realize the enormity of this problem and to share their opinions with their representatives in Trenton.

If this does not occur, the myriad traffic safety and advocacy issues AAA cares deeply about and that are highlighted in this report, will become moot: Bridges and roads will exist in disrepair, motorists will deem infrastructure unsafe and the continuation of clogged highways will go on to have a negative impact on our state's economy.

The time for action is now. A hazardous road network is an empty road network.

I hope you enjoy the content of our 2008 Report to the Legislature.

About This Report

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey undertake this comprehensive transportation survey every two years. We share its results with the Legislature and use those results as a foundation for legislative and other advocacy efforts. While some questions and issues stay the same from report to report, others change. AAA's purpose, however, does not: Our sole interest is serving AAA members and all motorists through advocacy efforts. These data, along with data collected during the past 10 years, augments those efforts. We hope you find the results informative.

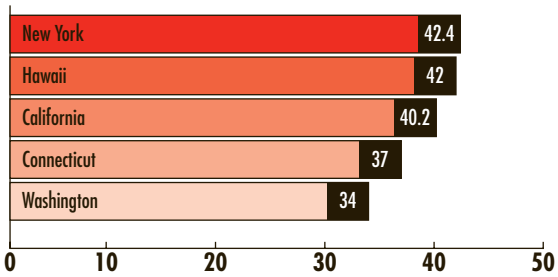
Data published by the AAA Clubs of New Jersey in this Report to the Legislature is derived from a telephone survey of randomly selected New Jersey motorists – AAA members and non-members. The survey occurred in November 2007. The margin of error for the 2007 survey is +/- 3.1 percentage points.

Survey data was collected and prepared by National Research, Inc., of Holmdel.

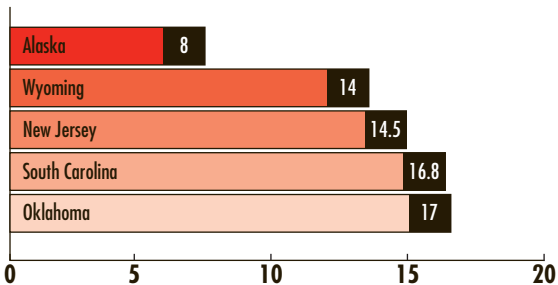
Transportation Funding

If the status quo continues, New Jersey's Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) will become a debt-service fund within several years. Over-bonding and too few toll increases to cover increased bond debt, and a refusal by the Legislature to increase New Jersey's gas tax, has created this legacy.

Top Five State Gas Taxes



Top Five Lowest State Gas Taxes



In less than three years, New Jersey will no longer have the ability to fund capitol transportation projects, including bridge repair, maintenance and improvements. The consequences of allowing that to happen will be disastrous.

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey have long advocated for tightening TTF bonding practices, for new or improved revenue streams and most of all, an end to diversion. For more than 100 years, AAA has advocated that money motorists pay in tolls or through gas taxes should only be used for transportation projects.

AAA has long supported reasonable toll increases and revisiting the state's gas tax in times of great need as a way to fund and finance transportation infrastructure upkeep, improvement and expansion, so long as those increased revenues are dedicated to transportation. We do so again here. And we say, once again, that revenue derived from transportation must be used solely for transportation purposes.

Toll Increases

“Would you support or oppose an increase in New Jersey’s tolls to support road and bridge repair, and improve our transportation infrastructure?”

- 48% favor
- 47% oppose

Motorists are split on whether to support a toll increase to keep New Jersey's transportation system in good repair. AAA believes reasonable toll increases are occasionally merited to keep toll roads and bridges throughout the toll network in good repair.

Gas Tax

“Would you support or oppose an increase in New Jersey’s gas tax to support road and bridge repair, and improve our transportation infrastructure?”

For two decades, New Jersey's gas tax has been held steady, even as its ability to adequately fund transportation in the state has been whittled away by inflation, construction cost increases and improved vehicle gas economy.

Opposition for a gas tax increase, however, has been very strong – and continues to be. No doubt, the high cost of gasoline will make revisiting New Jersey's gas tax this year even more undesirable. At the same time, AAA believes the cost and consequences of doing nothing relating to this important transportation funding mechanism is even more undesirable.

- 65% oppose
- 32% support

Road Conditions & Perceptions

Perceptions motorists have of roads are not necessarily reality, but the court of public opinion certainly matters, particularly in New Jersey, when it comes to road conditions. Those perceptions have not dramatically improved since AAA's last survey.

Toll roads score the most points with motorists:

- 15% rated the Turnpike and Parkway in "Excellent" condition
- 58% rated the Turnpike and Parkway in "Good" condition
- 19% rated the Turnpike and Parkway in "Poor" (4%) or "Fair" (15%) condition

These numbers track closely with the AAA Clubs of New Jersey's previous statewide surveys over the last six years.

New Jersey's interstate highways, like 295, 287, 78 and 80, score well, too:

- 9% rated these roads in "Excellent" condition
- 54% rated these roads in "Good" condition
- 30% rated these roads in "Poor" (7%) or "Fair" (23%) condition

These numbers track closely with the AAA Clubs of New Jersey's previous statewide polls over the last six years.

State and county roads, such as 1, 9, 31, 55 and 206, were rated in much worse condition:

- 2% rated these roads are in "Excellent" condition
- 33% rated these roads are in "Good" condition
- 50% rated these roads in "Poor" (15%) or "Fair" (35%) condition

The 50% total "Poor" and "Fair" response is down from 56% in 2005, which is well outside the margin of error for both surveys. The percentage of those who agreed, in 2007, that these roads are in "Good" or "Excellent" condition has risen from 27% in the Clubs' 2003 survey, also outside the margin of error for both polls.



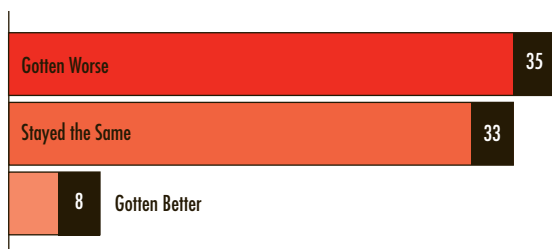
Local roads score average marks:

- 5% rated these roads are in “Excellent” condition
- 37% rated these roads are in “Good” condition
- 57% rated these roads in “Poor” (18%) or “Fair” (39%) condition

These numbers are consistent with the AAA Clubs of New Jersey’s previous statewide polls over the last six years.

The Commute

New Jersey motorists struggle to get to and from work. More than two-thirds report a commute that has gotten worse or remained the same during the last two years, at 35% and 33%, respectively.



Fewer than one in 10 are experiencing a better commute today than they did two years ago. Clearly, New Jersey must address the cost and causes of congestion.

Other commute-related data:

- Highest percentage that report “Worse,” at 51%, are those who use state roads to get to and from work.
- Next highest, at 49%, were those who use interstate highways.
- Highest percentage that report “Better” for their commute, at 17%, are those who use the Turnpike and Parkway to get to and from work.

Mass Transit

Mass transit users report a poor commute, too. For those who use mass transit in some part or all of their commute:

- 95% say their commute has gotten worse (50%) or remained the same (45%).
- 6% say their commute has gotten “Better.”

For those who do not use mass transit in their commute:

- 46% say their commute has gotten “Worse.”
- 43% say their commute has remained the “Same.”
- 11% say their commute has gotten “Better.”



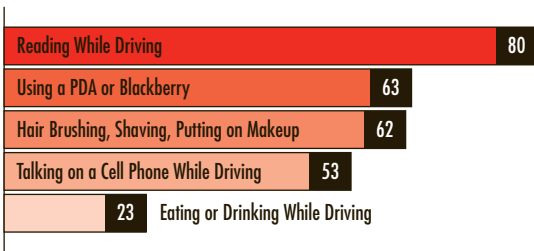
Traffic Safety

Driving Distractions

Distracted driving contributes to about 30% of all crashes, according to NHTSA, or about 1.2 million crashes annually. AAA believes thinking broadly about driver distractions in motor vehicles is the best way to keep distracted driving off our roads. While some distractions seem more prevalent than others, AAA believes banning specific distractions through legislation, while a step in the right direction, implicitly allows other dangerous distractions that are not banned through legislation.

Cell phones are among dozens of distractions that keep drivers from their main task: Driving.

Top Five Driver Distractions



% of "Top Box" Responses, i.e. 9 and 10

"How distracted do you feel while driving and talking on your cell phone? How distracted do you feel other drivers are while driving and talking on their cell phones?"

New Jersey motorists think other drivers - not themselves - are distracted when talking on a cell phone while driving:

- 90% say others are distracted.
- 59% say they are not distracted.

Also, regarding driving and cell phone usage:

- 56% do not believe New Jersey's previous hand-held cell phone ban made a safety impact on New Jersey roads, which tracks closely with AAA's 2005 survey.

New Jersey, as of March 1, 2008, has a new cell phone ban. Police can stop motorists who are talking on a hand-held cell phone or text messaging using a cell phone or other device while driving.

- 85% support this law, and think it will make a safety impact.

The Top Driving Distractions on New Jersey Roads

Child Passenger Safety

This year, AAA celebrates the 30th anniversary of the first child passenger safety law, in Tennessee. Yet, nearly 100 children under age five still die every year in survivable crashes because they were not restrained properly in a child safety seat. In 2006 alone, nearly 400 children eight or younger died in car crashes.

New Jersey's child passenger safety law is strong, and AAA applauds the Legislature for continually updating this law.



- 14% of New Jersey motorists reported having a child eight years or younger in the household. Of that number:
- 94% reported always securing their children under eight years old with a booster or infant seat. (same percentage as 2005 survey).
- 73% reported that a certified child passenger safety technician, such as a police officer or AAA employee, installed the seat, up four percentage points since 2005.

AAA believes that the Legislature should consider a bill that enjoins plaintiffs from suing safety seat technicians for damages or injuries if the technician acted in good faith and without gross negligence in installing a child safety seat.

New Jersey would join such states as Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, Washington and Wisconsin in approving such legislation, which allows seat check programs run by certified safety seat technicians to grow and flourish.

A perceived risk of liability, however, has stymied their growth in New Jersey.

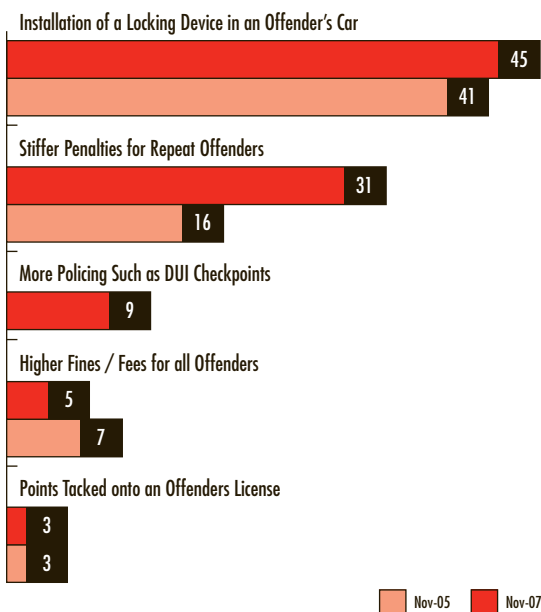
Driving Under the Influence

Instances of DUI have declined in the past decade, but still account for about 41% of all traffic fatalities, including nearly 18,000 in 2006 alone.

New Jersey motorists almost universally consider driving under the influence a serious safety problem on our roads. But they vary in their solutions to reduce the occurrence of drunk driving in New Jersey.

How Would You Stop Drunk Driving?

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey believe increased penalties for repeat offenders must be part of any solution. The percentage of New Jersey motorists who agree with that position has nearly doubled in two years, **from 16% in 2005 to 31% in 2007.**



New Jersey motorists also believe ignition interlock devices, a mechanism similar to a breathalyzer that is installed in a vehicle's dashboard, should be installed in the vehicles of those convicted of DUI. In fact:

- 45% percent believe offenders should be required to use them, up 4% from 2005
- Support for ignition interlock devices is highest among respondents from southern New Jersey (53%).



Aggressive Drivers

Encountering aggressive drivers is a nearly daily New Jersey experience: Motorists weaving between lanes, generally without using turn signals and with no regard for the flow of traffic; motorists flashing high-beams or using the horn to intimidate; tailgaters; and, those driving excessively fast. Often, it's all of the above.

Nine of 10 New Jersey drivers have encountered one or more of the above in the last six months.

Even so, New Jersey motorists rank aggressive driving as just the fourth worst safety issue on our roadways. The top five largest safety issues on New Jersey roadways, according to drivers polled, are:

1. Drunk Drivers
2. Text messaging drivers
3. Big trucks that tailgate
4. Aggressive drivers
5. Hand-held cell phone drivers

Ice and Snow

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey have supported – and will continue to support – a law that allows police to stop and cite drivers that do not make a reasonable effort to remove all ice and snow from their vehicles before driving. Today, police are allowed to stop and cite a driver only if ice or snow actually does fly from their car to cause injury or damage to another driver or vehicle.

At the time of publication for this report, a bill to give police the ability to stop drivers before injury or damage occurs was cleared for a full Senate vote; the General Assembly Transportation and Public Works Committee had not heard the bill.

AAA's position is supported by two-thirds of New Jersey motorists. In fact:

- 67% support enactment of such a law.
- 75% of seniors support it, while 55% of 18-29 year olds do.
- 68% of suburban residents support the law; 60% of urban residents do.

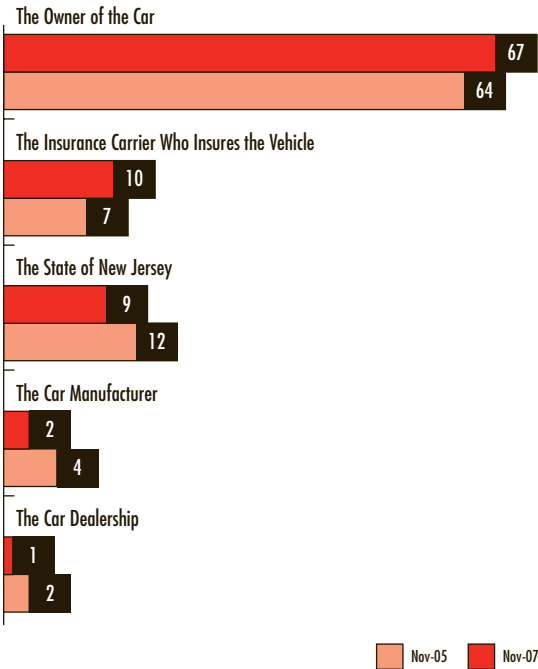
The AAA Clubs of New Jersey calls on the Legislature, and the governor, to move quickly to bring this important safety measure into law.

Technology

Black Boxes

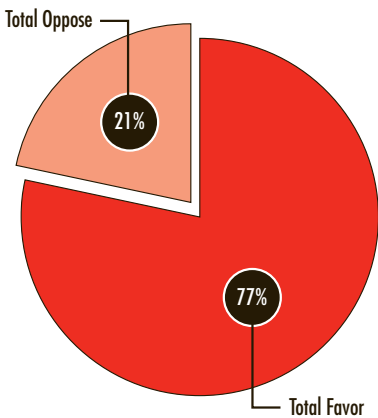
AAA strongly supports protecting the privacy of automobile owners whose vehicles are equipped with event data recorders, also know as "black boxes." This technology is similar to that installed in airplanes. It records pre-crash data, such as speed, seat belt use, braking and impact.

"Now that black boxes are installed in all new cars, who do you think should be the rightful owner of the information stored in the black box?"



Automated Enforcement

There is very strong support for this technology: More than seven in 10 New Jersey motorists, in fact.



Governor Corzine signed into law in early 2008 a bill legalizing automated red light enforcement cameras, for a five-year pilot program. The law requires that a safety impact study be done by each municipality that chooses to use the cameras. By allowing this technology, New Jersey has joined 22 other states and the District of Columbia.

AAA believes successful red light camera programs are possible, but only if the goal is increased safety, not increased revenue. New Jersey should require that municipalities that choose to take part in the pilot program, before installing cameras, must show:

- A need, through longitudinal crash data.
- Previous unsuccessful mitigation attempts, such as -
 - Traffic engineering.
 - Improved, increased signage.
 - Physical police presence.

“Do you favor the use of cameras on traffic lights to catch drivers who run through red lights, where violators would be mailed a summons?”

Support has risen significantly in just two years. The AAA Clubs of New Jersey will follow the pilot program closely to ensure traffic safety, not increased revenue, is the only goal.



Miscellaneous

EZ Pass

Usage continues to increase.

The AAA Clubs of New Jersey urge transportation officials to continue installing high-speed E-ZPass or open road tolling; this priority should permeate the toll road system in New Jersey. Additionally, AAA calls for the removal of any remaining gates at toll collection points where E-ZPass is currently installed to improve traffic flow, air quality and safety.

Auto Insurance

Rates in New Jersey, which remains one of the most expensive states in which to buy car insurance, have largely leveled off. Legislation to make the market place more competitive and, thus, buyer-friendly, has been largely successful.

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Key

- M-A = AAA Mid-Atlantic
- NJ = AAA New Jersey Automobile Club
- NoJ = AAA North Jersey
- SJ = AAA South Jersey
- * Denotes Club Headquarters