



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WI Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) appreciates the new TRIP report that highlights the needs of older drivers and provides recommendations to keep us safe on the roads as we age.

The **Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network** is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

Core member organizations:

Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)

Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter

Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)

Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)

Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)

Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)

Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)

Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)

Wisconsin Senior Corps Association (WISCA)

TRIP, a national transportation research group spotlighted the issue of older driver safety and mobility in their most recent report. *Preserving the Mobility and Safety of Older Americans* illustrates the growing population of older adults, older licensed drivers and fatal crashes among older drivers. The report recommends several strategies for keeping us, as drivers, safe as we age, and providing all of us options when it is no longer safe to do so. A link to the full report can be found here.

http://www.tripnet.org/docs/Older_Americans_Mobility_TRIP_Report_2018.pdf

While the headline announces that Wisconsin has the greatest number and share of fatalities involving older adults, this is due primarily to the frailty of the older adult and not the frequency of the accidents. It is important to note that the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that, "For drivers 65 and older, fatality rates per licensed driver did not differ for states with and without laws for vision testing, road testing or shortened renewal periods."

The TRIP report reminds us that we outlive our driving life expectancy by 7-10 years and that 70% of individuals over 50 years old live where transit does not exist or serves the area very poorly. This means to give up driving means giving up the ability to get around. "The level of mobility enjoyed by older Americans is closely tied to their quality of life." While autonomous and connected vehicles and ride-sharing can be solutions, these are still far in the future and not often found in rural areas. Improving and expanding transit, volunteer driving programs, taxi services and community transportation services are solutions that can be implemented now.

As the report begins, "The provision of transportation improvements that will make it easier for older American's to maintain their mobility will benefit users of all ages." We must remember that driving is about ability and not age. Safety measures and transportation options for older adults help us all. Older driver safety includes making roads and vehicles safer, providing education and expanding transportation options for those who cannot or should not be driving.

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