

# HIGHWAY WORK ZONE SAFETY

## Prioritize the Safety of Highway Work Zones

### Action Needed:

Tell the House and Senate to protect construction workers by encouraging states to prioritize the safety of highway work zones.

### Background:

According to a 2023 AGC work zone safety [survey](#), 55% of highway contractors report that motor vehicles had crashed into their construction work zones during the past year, putting motorists, workers and state employees at risk. Congress and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have taken steps to ensure safety of drivers and pedestrians. Now it is time for them focus on the people building the roads.

While FHWA handles the physical safety infrastructure, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) handles behavioral safety on our nation's roads. However, work zone safety has largely been viewed as a responsibility of FHWA and the states. Given the behavioral nature of a work zone – the need to change lanes, slow down, or merge – AGC believes that NHTSA should be involved in decisions on how to reduce accidents in work zones. Over the years, NHTSA has forced states to prioritize key safety metrics including the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, older drivers, teen drivers, and we would add work zones to that list.

### AGC Message:

- **Force states to consider work zone safety in the development of their highway safety program in order to receive safety funds.**
  - Congress should ensure that actions to reduce injuries and deaths of drivers and highway workers are included as part of that plan.
  - This would protect all personnel in a work zone: including construction workers, DOT, utilities, and law enforcement, performing work within the right-of-way of a transportation facility.
- **Congress should create a work zone safety special rule.** If states see an increase in the number of injuries and fatalities in work zones during a consecutive two-year period, then they should be required to spend at least ten percent of their Highway Safety Improvement Program funding to address this issue in the next year.
- **Congress should require each state to prioritize highway work zone safety in their highway safety program in order to receive NHTSA funding.**
- **AGC of America is working on legislation achieve this goal.** Please contact Alex Etchen, [alex.etchen@agc.org](mailto:alex.etchen@agc.org) if your office would like to assist.