



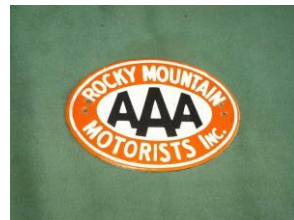
TESTIMONY  
BEFORE THE  
TRANSPORTATION  
LEGISLATION  
REVIEW  
COMMITTEE

9.16.2019

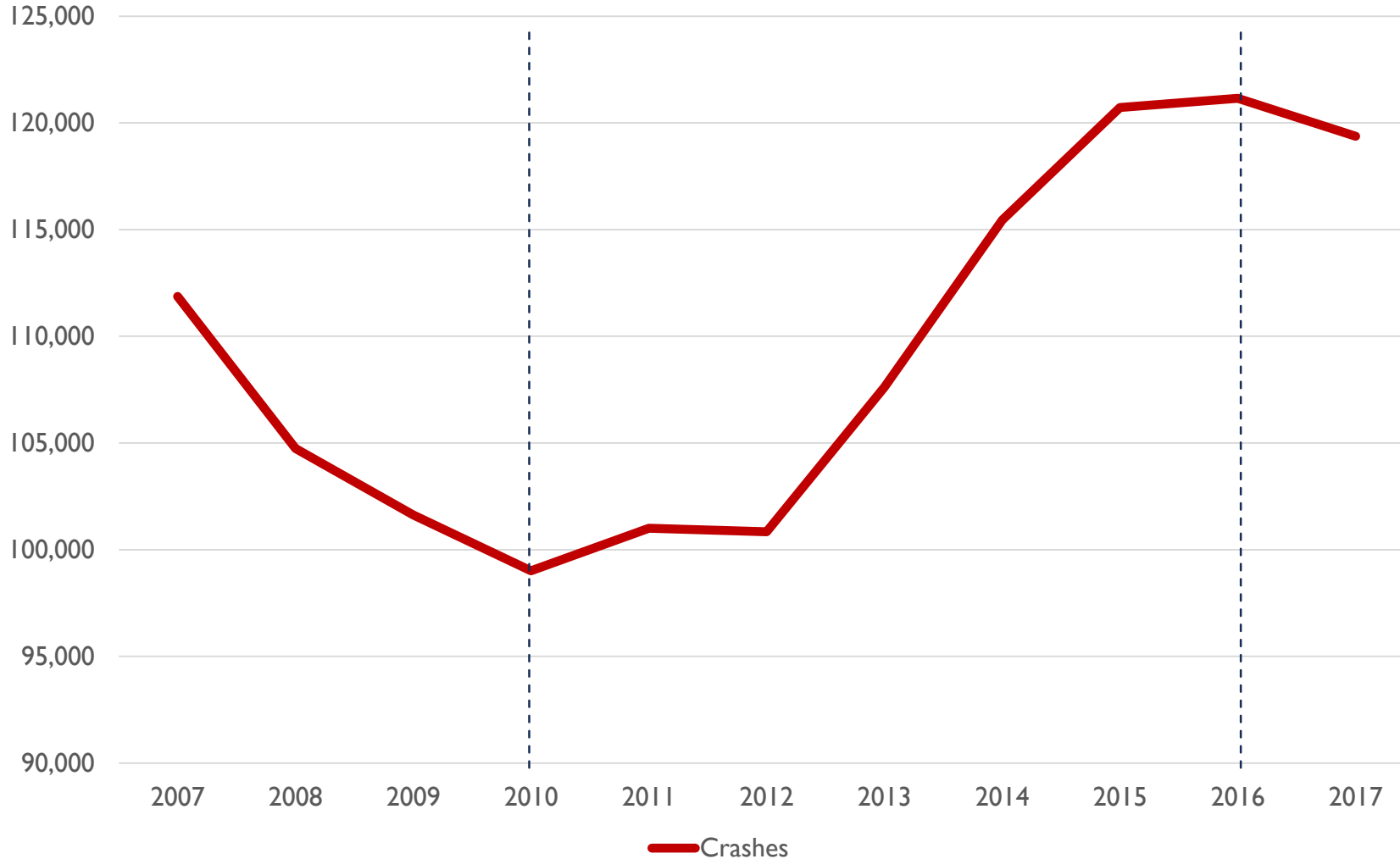
Modernizing Colorado's  
Driver's Education System



# OUR HISTORY



Reported Crashes: Colorado, 2007 – 2017



Source: CDOT, 2019

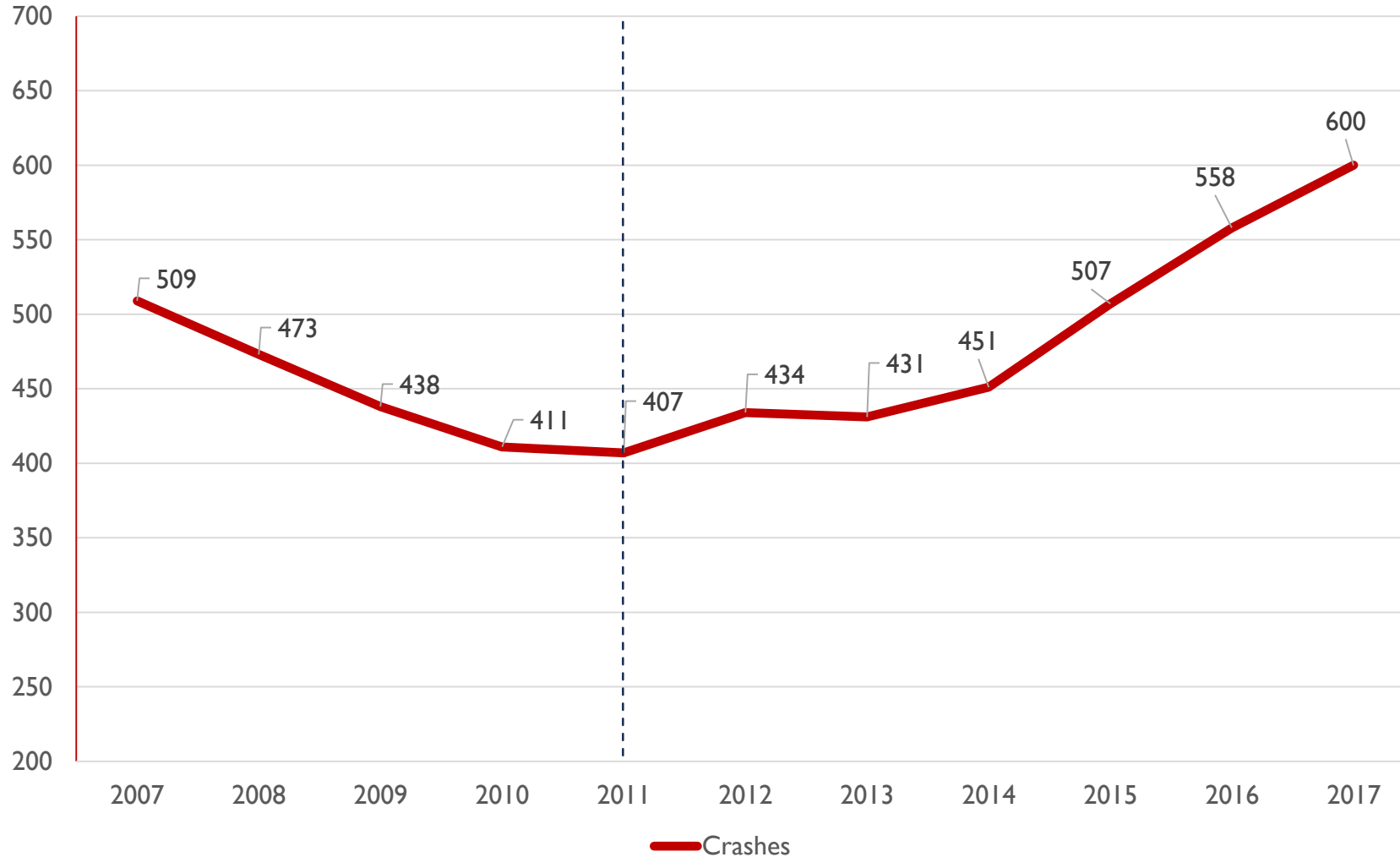
**If you look at crash data going all the way back to 1975, you tend to see pretty steady, year-over-year declines. Why?**

- Stronger laws
- Changing Behavior

**So when you begin to see the line move *upward*, it's worth looking at.**

**Full disclosure:** Overall crashes tend to increase with an improving economy and growing state. **Typically not to the tune of 20 percent over seven years, however.**

Fatal Crashes: Colorado, 2007 – 2017



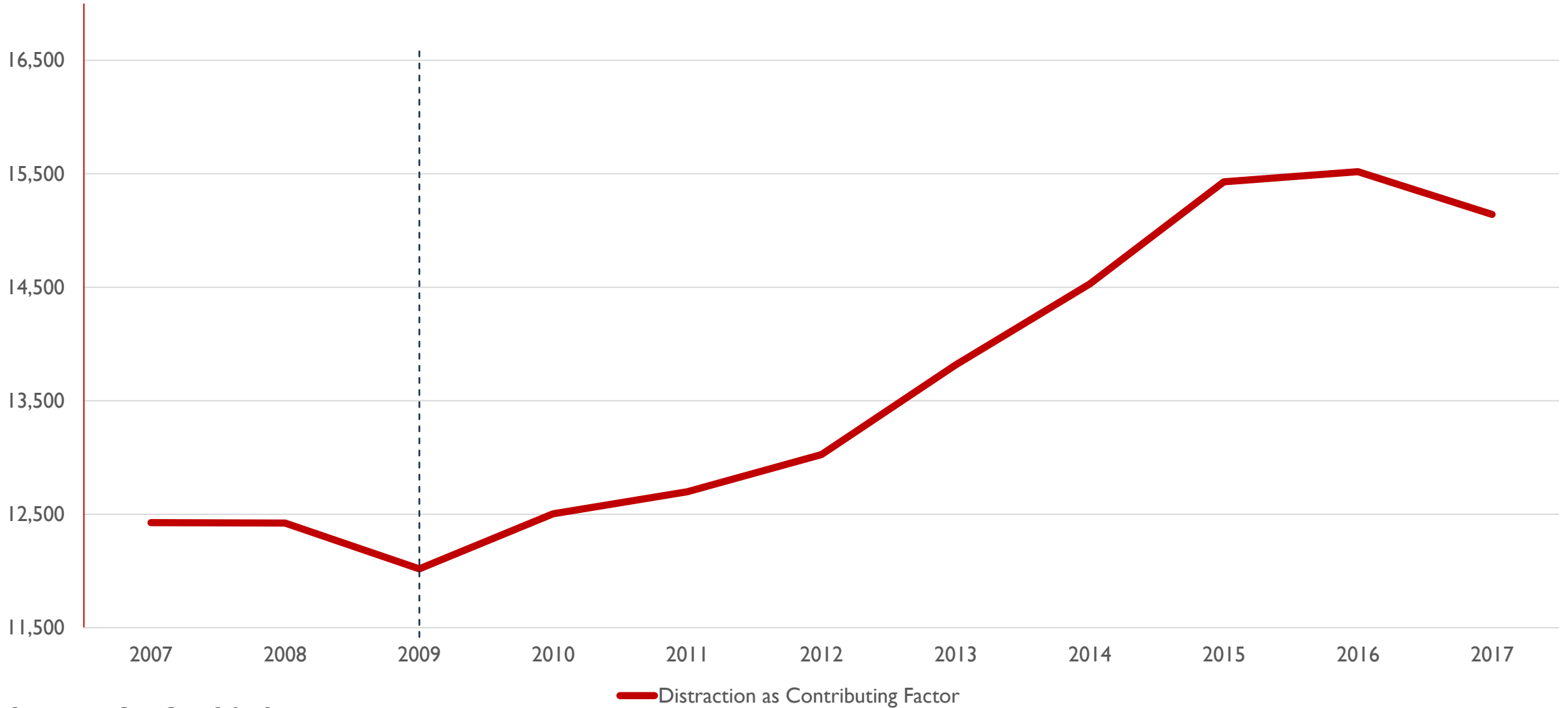
The same is true for **FATAL** crashes – crashes leading to the death of someone. You typically expect this figure to decline over a ten year period, because of:

- Stronger laws
- Changing Behavior
- **Safer Vehicles**
- **Better Technology**

600 fatalities were reported on Colorado roadways in 2017. That's the highest figure since 2002.

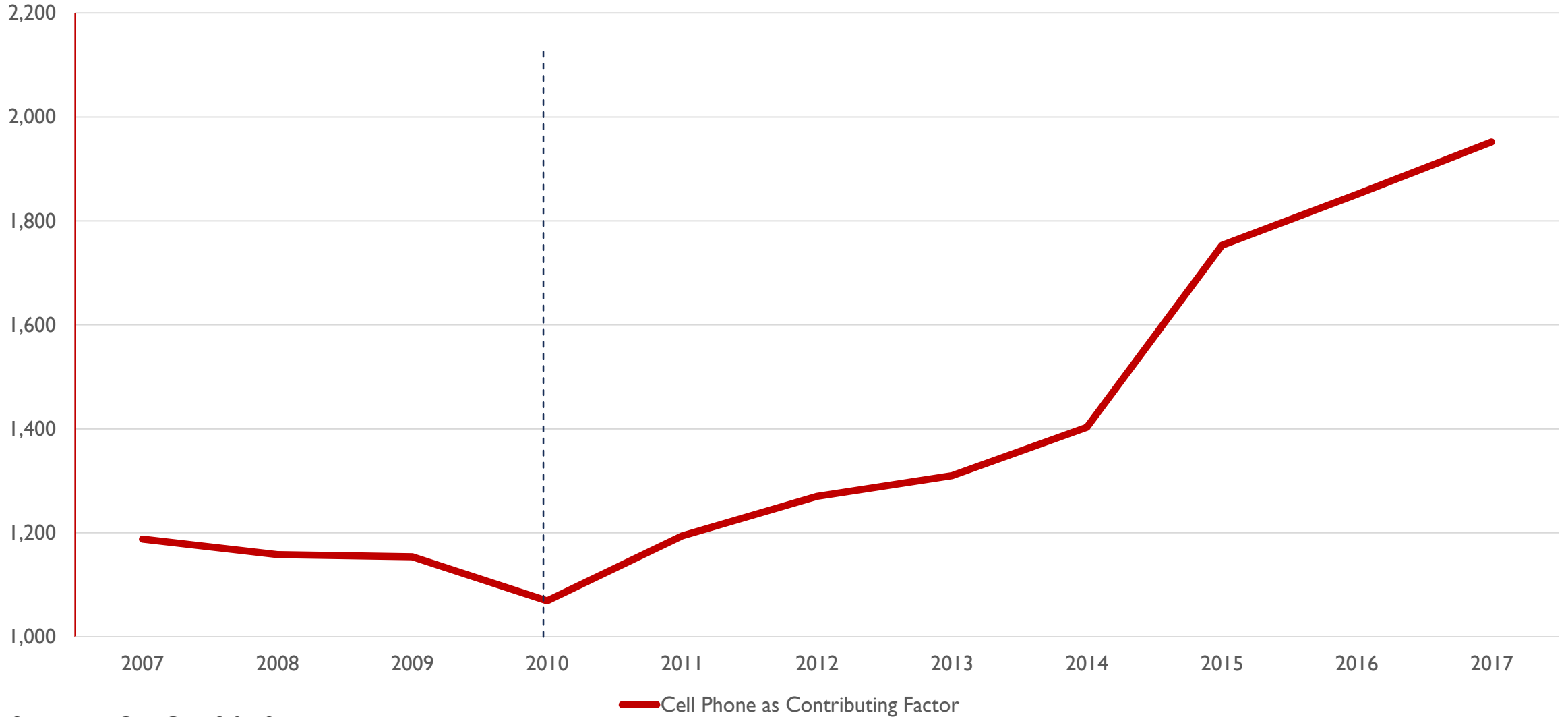
Source: FARS, 2019

## Contributing Factor to Colorado Crash: Distraction



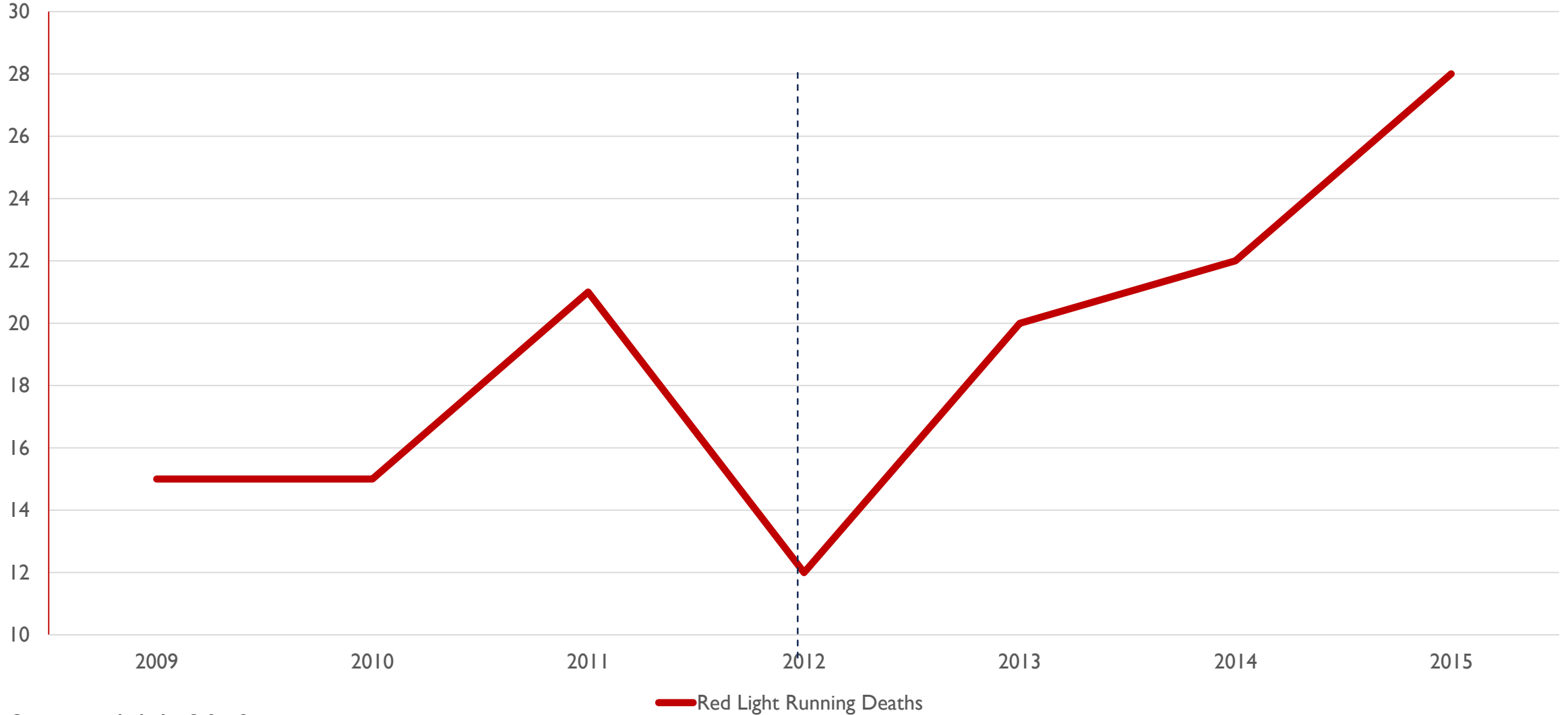
Source: CDOT, 2019

## Contributing Factor to Colorado Crash: Cell Phones



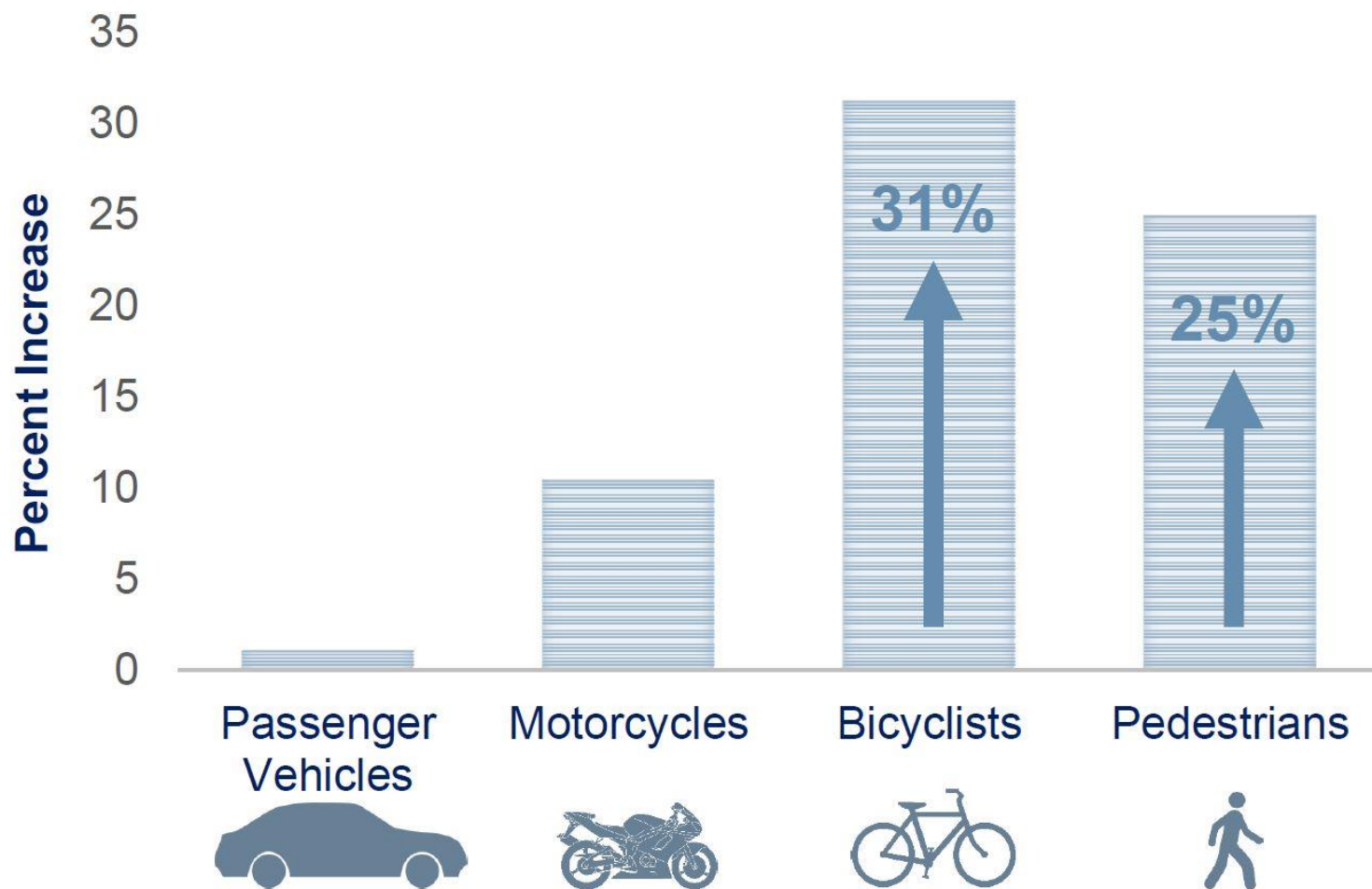
Source: CDOT, 2019

## Contributing Factor to Colorado Crash Fatality: Red Light Running (2009-2015)



Source: AAA, 2019

# Motor Vehicle Fatalities, 2010-2015



Source: 2001-2015 FARS data

In 2016, bicyclist and pedestrian fatalities hit their highest levels in 20 years.

Of all deaths, bicycle and pedestrians have also increased the most since 2010.

**If you look at year-over-year changes, it's pedestrians and bicyclists who are most likely to be killed by a car – not other drivers.**



## WHY? A “DO-AS-I-SAY, NOT-AS-I-DO” CULTURE

**97 percent** of drivers think texting or e-mailing while driving is “extremely or very dangerous”

- 41 percent of drivers admit to doing it in the past month.

**85.4 percent** of drivers think running red lights is “extremely or very dangerous.”

- 31 percent of drivers admit to doing it in the past month.

## WHY? A “DO-AS-I-SAY, NOT-AS-I-DO” CULTURE

**64 percent** of drivers think speeding on residential streets is “extremely or very dangerous.”

- **40 percent** of drivers admit to doing it in the past month.

**96.2 percent** of drivers think drowsy driving is “extremely or very dangerous.”

- **27 percent** of drivers admit to doing it in the past month.

# WHAT TOOLS CAN WE USE TO COMBAT BAD BEHAVIOR?

Criminalization



Education



Enforcement

# CRIMINALIZATION & ENFORCEMENT

## criminalization

In many cases, these laws are already on the books: Speeding, red-light running, anti-DUI measures, and so on. Already illegal, people still do it. We're all occasionally guilty.

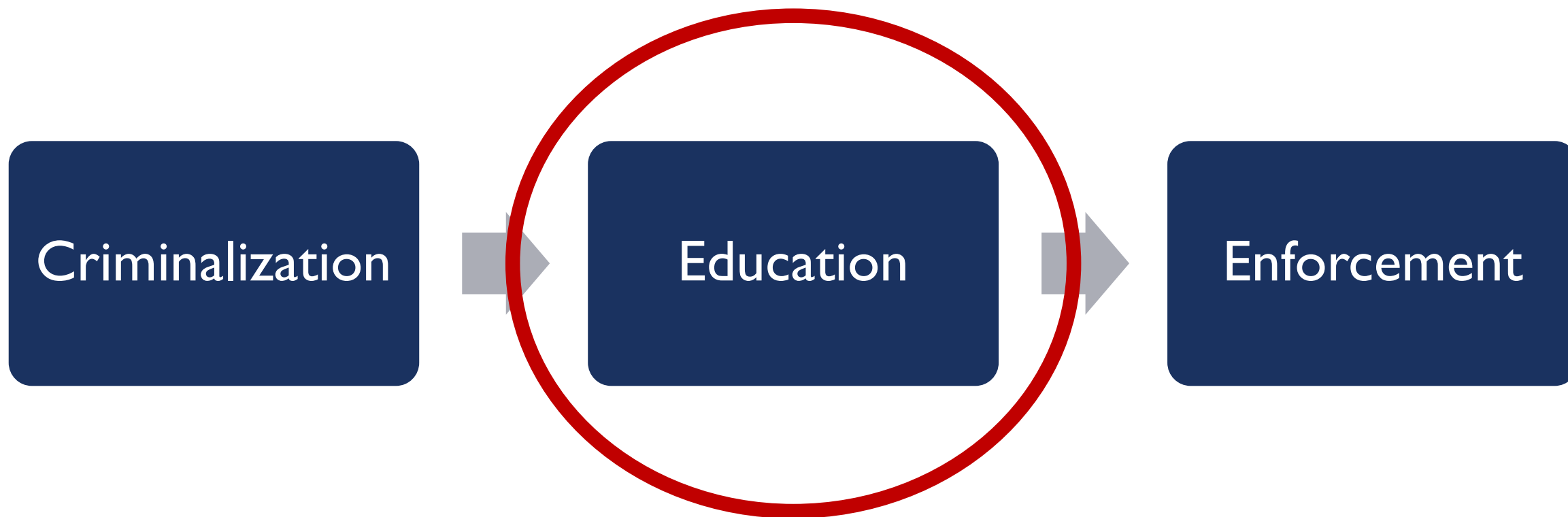
In other cases, the legislature has decided there were compelling reasons that weigh *against* criminalization, as we see with **primary seat belt** and **handheld phone ban** defeats.

## enforcement

We know enforcement works to dramatically reduce the incident rate of traffic safety violations. But police can't be everywhere all the time, and automated enforcement is controversial. What's it all cost?

As in any area of criminal justice, there are distinct civil liberty and social equity concerns: *Who* gets pulled over, *why* do they get pulled over, and are how do outcomes differ by race and class?

# WHAT TOOLS CAN WE USE TO COMBAT BAD BEHAVIOR?



A photograph of a man and a woman inside a car. The woman is in the driver's seat, wearing a purple top and holding the steering wheel. The man is in the passenger seat, wearing a light blue shirt and a seatbelt, looking towards the woman. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

**Raise Your Hand: How many of you took some form of Driver's Ed?**

# HERE'S THE PROBLEM: IN COLORADO, LOOPHOLES YOU COULD DRIVE A TRUCK THROUGH

Age	30 Hours of Driver's Ed	4-hour Driver Awareness Program	50-hours supervised driving time	6-hours formal behind-the-wheel training
15-15.5	REQUIRED	Not Available	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
15.5 to 16	OPTION A	OPTION B	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
16-17	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
18+	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED

## THIS CAN LEAD TO SOME ABSURD OUTCOMES

There is no credible science to suggest I am an innately safer driver, requiring less education, at age 15 years and six months than I am at age 15.

There is no credible science to suggest a 4-hour awareness course matches the rigor or outcomes of a 30-hour driver's ed course.

The day I turn 16, Colorado assumes I am so much safer a driver than the day before that I don't need any formal classroom or behind-the-wheel training.

The day I turn 18, Colorado assumes I am so much safer a driver that I do not require **any** driver's education, of any kind.



# THE ULTIMATE ABSURDITY

- As a general proposition, the State of Colorado believes that driver's education leads to better, safer outcomes among drivers and requires it of its citizens *unless*:
  - I'm older than 15 and a half.
  - I'm older than 16.
  - I'm older than 18.
- We're trying to get the best of both worlds, and failing. We either believe in driver's education and should require it more consistently across the board, or we do not believe in driver's education whatsoever and should attempt to address this public health crisis through criminalization and enforcement.
- As currently conceived, we only want you to be the safest, best-educated driver possible if you're younger than 15 and a half.

# OTHER LICENSING REQUIREMENTS?

## Barber

- 50 credit hours of formal training > 1500 contact hours > formal exam

## Nail Technician

- 50 credit hours of formal training > 600 contact hours > formal exam

## Notary Public

- Formal, state-approved training (varies in length). Several hours when I last went through it.

## WHAT DO OTHER STATES DO? ILLINOIS

- Under 18?
  - 30-hours classroom training
  - 6-hours behind the wheel training



# WHAT DO OTHER STATES DO? MASSACHUSETTS

- Under 18?
  - 30-hours classroom training
  - 18-hours behind the wheel training



# WHAT DO OTHER STATES DO? CALIFORNIA

- Under 18?
  - 30-hours classroom training
  - 6-hours behind the wheel training



## WHAT DO OTHER STATES DO? NEW HAMPSHIRE

- Under 18?
  - 30-hours classroom training
  - 16-hours behind the wheel training



# IT'S NOT POLITICAL: "RED" STATES & REQUIREMENTS

## Georgia

- Under 17? 30 hours of classroom and 6 behind the wheel

## South Carolina

- Under 17? 30 hours of classroom, 6 behind the wheel, 6 observing.

## Texas

- Under 18? 32 hours of classroom and 44 hours of skills training.
- Under 25? 6 hours of classroom training.

# REGIONAL COMPARISON

## New Mexico

- Under 18? 30 hours of classroom and 7 behind the wheel

## Utah

- Under 18? 18 hours of classroom, 6 behind the wheel, 6 observing.

## Nevada

- Under 18? Must complete driver's education and 50-hours behind the wheel.

## Montana

- Under 16? 60-hour class, 6 hours behind the wheel.



# MODERNIZING COLORADO'S DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

## Perfect World

- Under 18: :30+ hours of classroom instruction, 6+ hours behind-the wheel instruction, 50+ hours of supervised driving time, hold permit for 12 months.
- Over 18: 4-hour DAP, 6+ hours behind-the-wheel instruction

## Sensible Reforms

- Eliminate absurd “under-18” age variances and require of everyone *under* 17 to match current age 15 requirements.
- Continue to require year-long permit holding for all 17 and under applicants.

# WHAT WOULD SENSIBLE REFORMS LOOK LIKE?

Age	30 Hours of Driver's Ed	50-hours supervised driving time	6-hours formal behind-the-wheel training
15-15.5	REQUIRED	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
15.5 to 16	REQUIRED	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
16-17	NOT REQUIRED	REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
18+	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED

# ONE LAST TIME: THE CURRENT APPROACH

Age	30 Hours of Driver's Ed	4-hour Driver Awareness Program	50-hours supervised driving time	6-hours formal behind-the-wheel training
15-15.5	REQUIRED	Not Available	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
15.5 to 16	OPTION A	OPTION B	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
16-17	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
18+	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED

## OTHER MINOR REFORMS

### Fees

- DOR does not charge application or certification fees for driving schools or driving instructors. This is fairly unique for a regulatory agency in this context. Revenues raised from a fee structure could subsidize scholarships for driver's ed.

### Fingerprinting and Background Checks

- Most people who regularly interact with minors for instruction purposes are crosschecked with national fingerprint databases for criminal history. Weird exemption? Driving school instructors.

Questions? Comments?

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