

Hello Everyone,

It's great to be here today with our neighbors to the West to participate in the Border-to-Border initiative and raise awareness for seat belt enforcement. While Click it or Ticket has become a household name in many ways, we must remind ourselves that at its core, this campaign is about saving lives.

As others have noted, last year, the rate of seat belt usage in Vermont was 88.8%, while this sounds high, the numbers have been declining in recent years.

As we begin to recover from Covid-19, and the world begins to reopen, more Vermonters will be back on the road driving to work, to see family and friends, and getting back to all of the places they've missed. Whether you are headed to a concert, the trailhead, the farmers market, or the office, or across the lake to New York, it is essential that all those in the vehicle wear their seat belt.

We know that in 2019, there were more fatalities in rural areas of the country than urban, with 48% of those killed in the rural locations were not wearing their seat belts. For obvious reasons, this statistic is significant for both our states.

We also know that women wear their seatbelt more than men, and those who drive trucks are significantly less likely to wear one when compared with all other vehicles. This is especially true on weekends, when passengers and drivers are nearly 4% less likely to wear their seatbelts.

I want to urge all those, on both sides of Lake Champlain, to buckle up this summer, and beyond. If you're a driver, encourage all those in the vehicle to wear their seat belt, and if you're a passenger, remind your driver of the risks.

Vermont, New York, and the country have lost so much this past year, and while we return to a new normal, please enjoy it safely.