

Direction of Improvement of Traffic Safety for Elderly Drivers amid Korea's Era of Rapidly Aging Population

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Summary

- 1) Improvement needed in transportation policy toward senior citizen drivers as the number of deaths of elderly drivers over age 65 has jumped over the last five years, while that of non-elderly drivers under age 65 has gradually declined
 - ⑤ No. of traffic accident deaths caused by elderly drivers up 34.7 percent -- 605 in 2011 to 815 in 2015; that caused by non-senior citizen drivers down 17.2 percent from 4,594 to 3,802 over same period
 - ⑤ Among age groups of senior citizen drivers, the number of traffic deaths among those in the 65-69 age range declined, that among those in the 70-74 group held steady and that among those age 75 or over rose
- 2) To raise the safety level for elderly drivers to that of advanced economies, the status of related plans and institutional improvement must be examined
 - ⑤ To make progress in raising safety for elderly drivers, Korea must utilize a plan for institutional improvement through traffic safety planning for such drivers, a center for road transportation safety information, license management system, medical instructions and driver education.
- 3) Suggest a variety of directions for traffic safety policy given characteristics of connection between elderly drivers and traffic accidents

Policy Direction

- 1) Improve and expand transportation infrastructure to raise the visibility of elderly drivers, such as enlargement of letters on traffic signs
 - ⑤ Improve traffic facilities like streamlining trees along streets, installing streetlights and setting up lights at late-night, accident-prone spots
- 2) The Korea Expressway Corp. should expand safety education like mandatory courses on traffic safety and continuously promote it

- ⑤ Offer preventive education with the U.S. on the danger of violating traffic laws, and additional driver's education
 - ⑤ Run simulation of drunk driving with interactive goggles to stress the risk and danger of driving under the influence
- 3) Provide various institutional improvements and funding support to reduce the number of accidents caused by traffic violations
- ⑤ To reduce the causes of accidents like violations of parking and crossroads, crossing the median line and lack of safe roads, support is needed for installation of vehicular safety technology like warning devices for lane violations and partial self-driving function
 - ⑤ For drivers age 75 or over, an aptitude test including a cognitive section and additional highway driving test should be administered every three years
 - ⑤ Specialized strategies should be explored to set up an operation headquarters for the promotion of traffic safety for elderly drivers specialized in the characteristics of each region