

Good afternoon, Committee Members,

My name is Barbara Brody, and I am testifying on S133. I have been a long time Driver Education Teacher, a School Administrator, taught at St. Cloud State University's Highway Safety Center, work at Youth Spectrum in Burlington teaching Foster Teens and Young Adults and I am the Executive Director for the Vermont Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (VDTSEA).

I am sorry I could not be with you in person, but I am away until Friday of this week.

I totally understand the pressure that the Agency of Education and the Department of Motor Vehicles is under from the public to have Driver Education Courses be done quicker and more available to teens and young adults.

We, at VDTSEA want to work with the AOE and the DMV to help with these issues, but doing the behind-the-wheel instruction quicker is not the answer.

Many studies have been done on the benefits of Distributed Learning over time. This is spreading out the learning to do something repeatedly so the learner can become more proficient.

Research tells us that repetition is more effective when it is spaced. Studying one piece of information at different times will benefit learning much more than studying it all at one time.

The benefits of distributed practice can be found in a variety of areas: fact learning, problem solving, physical activity and more. The research is undeniable. Why may you ask?

The practice is known as the spacing effect: “spaced reviews of the same information is better than repeated reviews in a short time.”

Traditional classroom learning known as mass learning usually only allows students to store information in their short-term memory. But when learning sessions are spaced and repeated over time their long-term memory is activated and learning can last longer. Students can then retrieve the information from their memories in the future.

Repeating an activity enough can train your brain to automatically remember it. That is part of Habit Development. Automatically without thought do the proper procedure. This is what is needed in teaching

Driver Education. At the end of our course, we want our students to do procedures like making a left or right turn, approaching intersections, navigating around sharp turns, interacting with others on the roadway, driving on the Interstate and overtaking a vehicle in a passing situation as a habit without thinking about how to do it. This is done by doing distributed practice, which requires repetition over time.

We want to continue to have our young teen drivers have less traffic violations, cause less crashes and less fatalities.

We must look at other avenues to help students receive Driver Education earlier than they do now. Let us work together to make that happen.

Respectfully Submitted

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Executive Director of VDTSEA