GRADUATED DRIVER’S LICENSE

WHEREAS, Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for American teenagers totaling nearly one-third of all deaths in this age group; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Highway Safety Administration, young people age 15-20 make up 6.7 percent of the total driving population in this country but are involved in 14 percent of all fatal crashes; and

WHEREAS, Nearly half of the fatal crashes involving 16-year olds were single vehicle crashes; and

WHEREAS, Sixteen-year-old drivers have crash rates three times greater than 17-year-olds, five times greater than 18-year-olds, fifteen times greater than 20 to 24-year-olds, and twice those of 85-year-olds; and

WHEREAS, Forty-one percent of fatal crashes involving teenagers occur between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.; and

WHEREAS, Sixty-five percent of teenage passengers’ deaths occurred in crashes where a teenager was driving; and

WHEREAS, According to the January 25, 2000, Tennessee Crash Reporting System statistics for 1998, 15-20-year-olds were involved in 15 percent of all fatal crashes, 17 percent of all crashes involving injury and 16 percent involving property damage; and

WHEREAS, Graduated Driver’s License allow young drivers to gain driving experience in controlled, lower risk situations; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Tennessee PTA shall work toward protecting teenage drivers through supporting legislation requiring a Graduated Driver’s Licensing system; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Tennessee PTA urge legislators to raise the minimum age for acquiring a learner’s permit to sixteen years; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Tennessee PTA encourage legislators to permanently fund a comprehensive driver’s education program in all public high schools.

Adopted by the 2000 Convention Delegates

Referred to Health and Safety Committee – 11, 2005