

Students seek safer Highway 75

(KNZA)--A group of area students are seeking safety improvements to a stretch of U.S. 75 Highway.

Student council representatives from eight schools in Brown, Jackson and Nemaha Counties recently met at Jackson Heights High School to brainstorm ideas to make Highway 75 safer between Holton and the Nebraska state line.

Some of the ideas include installing lights, adding or extending turning and acceleration lanes, adding J-turn lanes at dangerous intersections, monitoring traffic more frequently along the highway and lowering the speed limit in areas with dangerous turns.

According to a statement prepared for presentation to the Kansas House Transportation and Public Safety Budget Committee, the students said they are aware that expanding Highway 75 from Holton to Sabetha is on the governor's 10-year plan, but asked that changes be made now to make the highway safer.

During the last five years, the students noted there have been more than 300 crashes, at least 61 injuries and at least 8 deaths on the stretch of highway. Among those killed have been two Jackson Heights High School students and three members of a Sabetha family.

The students say they are working on an educational campaign at their schools to raise student awareness of safe driving practices but need a multi-pronged approach with improvements to infrastructure to increase safety along with more education.

The students asked the committee to give the Kansas Department of Transportation the necessary funding to improve the safety of U.S. 75 Highway, allowing them to conduct a study if needed to determine what steps can be taken now to make the stretch of highway safer.

The students added “ what is clear is that we can no longer stand idly by while people continue to be killed or severely injured on this stretch of highway.”

The Nemaha County Commission last week agreed to write a letter supporting the students' efforts.

Many Signals Communications