Did Graduated Driver Licensing Increase the Number of Newly Licensed 18-Year-Old Drivers in North Carolina?

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Transition to GDL scrambles license data

- **Old system**
  - Permit – Optional or brief
  - Full license

- **New system**
  - Permit – mandatory, lengthy
  - Intermediate – mandatory, lengthy
  - Full license

- Not directly comparable
Driver License Data Analysis

- FHWA License Data Untrustworthy
  - Poor quality control
  - Erratic year-to-year fluctuations
  - Worse for young drivers
  - IIHS, UNC, others stopped using

- Need to use original state data
Anomalies in FHWA 16-yr-old licensing data
GDL License Complexities – Existing 16-yr-old NC driver licenses, 1996 -2001
GDL License Complexities – Existing 17-yr-old NC driver licenses, 1996 -2001

- Permit
- License
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
Less problematic at age 18

- NC, same before & after GDL
  - Permit – Optional or brief
  - Full license
Monthly initial license issues to 18-year-olds, North Carolina: 1988 - 2008

GDL introduced
Monthly initial license issues to 18-year-olds, North Carolina: 1988 - 2008
Monthly initial license issues to 18-year-olds, per capita, North Carolina: 1988 - 2008

GDL introduced
Monthly initial license issues to 18-year-olds, per capita, North Carolina: 1988 - 2008

GDL introduced
Caveats & conclusions

- One state, one GDL system
- Military, economic, other effects
- Nonetheless …
  - Licensing changed for 18-yr-old drivers for 2 years as GDL effects worked through system, then fell back
  - No evidence of permanent increase
Additional analyses under way …

Stay tuned …

for further developments