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New Director Sworn in, Will Head the California Office of Traffic Safety

Sacramento – Stephanie Dougherty was officially sworn in today as the new Director for the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). [Appointed](#) by Governor Gavin Newsom in December 2024, Dougherty will also serve as the Governor's Representative for Highway Safety at the federal level.

"I am honored to lead the Office of Traffic Safety and work alongside a team of dedicated professionals and with our partners to advance our urgent mission of saving lives," said OTS Director Stephanie Dougherty. "Together, we will focus on innovative solutions, community engagement, and education to promote a strong safety culture and make our roadways safer for all Californians."

Dougherty most recently served as Deputy Secretary of Transportation Safety and Enforcement at the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) since 2016. She held multiple roles at the Department of Motor Vehicles from 2008 to 2016, including Chief of Enterprise Planning and Performance. Dougherty has also worked in a research and policy capacity for several state commissions and previously held project management positions with Blue Shield of California and Deloitte Consulting. Dougherty earned a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California and a Bachelor of Arts in History from Stanford University.

"I am excited to have Stephanie take the lead at OTS during this important time for traffic safety," said Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin. "Her experience in the safety arena and her expertise on legislative and policy issues will help guide OTS in the right direction as we continue the critical work towards our goal of zero traffic deaths."

Through grant funding made available to California by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the OTS funds more than [\\$140 million annually](#) in innovative, evidence-based education and enforcement programs and technologies designed to improve road safety. The hundreds of projects funded throughout the state address alcohol and drug-impaired driving, distracted driving, seat belts and child safety seats, bicycle and pedestrian safety, emergency medical services, police traffic services and traffic records.

As the OTS Director, Dougherty will set annual goals and priority areas for safety programs in the Highway Safety Plan and Strategic Highway Safety Plan aimed at reducing the number of victims killed and injured on California roads. She is also

responsible for preparing an Annual Performance Report that highlights accomplishments in traffic safety efforts, as well as working with other agencies and partner organizations on new and innovative safety measures.

To learn more about our “Go Safely, California” campaign and join the movement for safer roads as a “traffic safety champion,” visit gosafelyca.org.

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