



**CAMPAIGN TO
ELIMINATE
DRUNK DRIVING**

**Johanna Krebs
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Before the House Judiciary Committee
Testimony in Support of House Bill 6066**

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My name is Johanna Krebs, Victim Services Specialist for Connecticut Affiliate of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 6066.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving believes this Committee should support House Bill 6066 as it is needed improvement in Connecticut's approach in handling those who drive drunk with a child passenger under the age of 16 in a vehicle. Connecticut is one of thirteen states with lacking a DUI child endangerment law. Every child deserves a sober designated driver.

Driving drunk with a child passenger in a vehicle is a form of child abuse. Every child deserves a designated driver. For those who are convicted of driving drunk with a child passenger in a vehicle or for injuring or killing a child passenger in a vehicle, it is time for the punishment to fit the crime. House Bill 6066 can help meet this goal of protecting our children from drunk drivers. Mothers Against Drunk Driving urges this committee to look at New York state and how they improved their DUI child endangerment law.

The new DUI child endangerment penalties in New York include:

- First time offenders driving while intoxicated (.08 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) or more) or impaired by drugs while a child of younger than 16 years old is in the vehicle may be charged with a class E felony punishable by up to 4 years in State prison.

- Individuals charged with driving with a blood alcohol level of .08 or greater and with a child under the age of 16 in the vehicle would automatically have their license suspended pending prosecution.

- Courts must order all drivers convicted of a misdemeanor or felony DWI (regardless if child passenger was in the vehicle) to install and maintain an ignition interlock on any vehicle owned and operated by such driver for at least 6 months, in addition to any term imprisonment. The Department of Probation and Correctional Alternatives will issue regulations that will provide counties with different options for supervising the use of interlocks, so as to ensure that they can determine the most appropriate mechanism for their needs.

- Drivers who drive while intoxicated or impaired by drugs and cause the death of a child younger than 16 in the car may be charged with a Class B felony, punishable by up to 25 years in State prison.

- Drivers who drive while intoxicated or impaired by drugs and cause serious physical injury to a child in the vehicle may be charged with the Class C felony, punishable by up to 15 years in State prison.

- Individuals who are a parent, guardian, custodian or otherwise legally responsible for a child who are charged with driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs while that child is a passenger in the car would be reported to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment by the arresting agency.

In conclusion, Mothers Against Drunk Driving urges this Committee to advance House Bill 6066. Thank you.