



Mothers Against Drunk Driving
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**Testimony by Janice Heggie Margolis
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S.B. 465

“An Act Concerning Ignition Interlock Devices”

Members of the Judicial Committee

March 17, 2014

Good Afternoon. My name is Janice Heggie Margolis and I am the Executive Director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving in Connecticut. Thank you for holding this Judiciary Public Hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and I hope together we can pass sound legislation that will preclude injuries and deaths and preserve Connecticut lives.

I have come before this committee today to endorse interlock **Senate Bill 465**, An Act Concerning Installation, Use and Enforcement Regarding Ignition Interlock Devices.

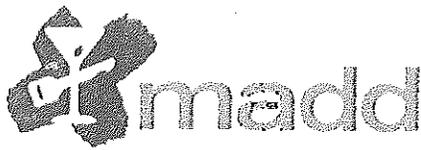
When passed, this bill will:

- prohibit persons arrested for the crime of DUI from operating a vehicle unless equipped with an IID;
- establish a specific identifiable operator's license or special operators for persons subject to an IID restriction on his or her driver's license;
- permit the forfeiture of a motor vehicle used by a person required to install an IID who fails to do so;
- require daily electronic monitoring for persons who claim to have no motor vehicle and therefore don not install an approved IID in a motor vehicle.

MADD is extremely concerned about the number of offenders who simply drive while suspended if interlocks are not required immediately (because they quickly discover how easy it is to drive unlicensed and undetected). A long delay between a licensing action and ignition interlock installation teaches offenders that they do not need a license to drive and decreases their incentive to ever re-enter the licensing control system.

Studies by federal agencies and independent think tanks highlight the high rate of recidivism associated with drunk driving. The typical person convicted of his or her first DUI offense has driven drunk as **80** times before being caught. We know that one third of persons convicted of DUI will be convicted of DUI yet again. Interlocks have been shown to deter drinking and driving in both a specific and general sense. DUI offenders using interlocks have acknowledged the device's change in their behaviors.

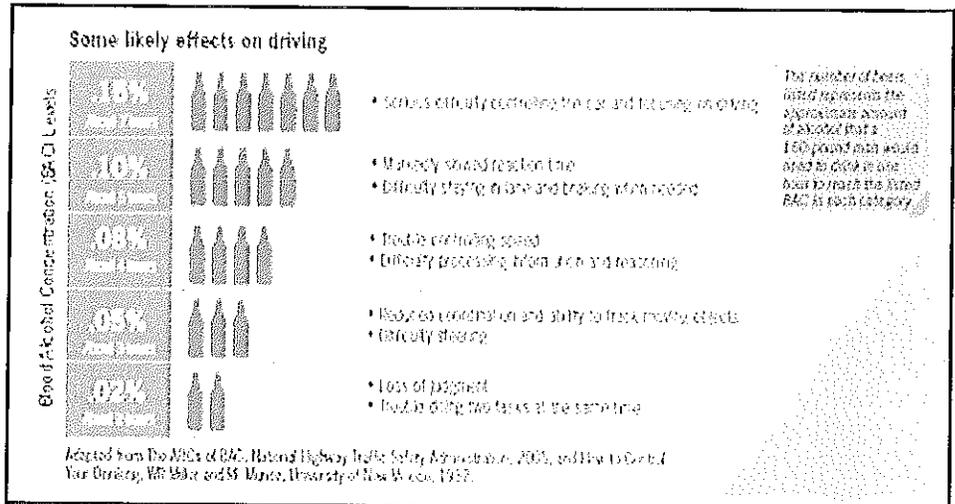
MADD respectfully requests strengthening the current CT IID law. Thank you.



Ignition Interlocks Save Lives

Ignition interlocks are small breathalyzers linked to a vehicle's ignition system. The convicted drunk driver must blow into the device to start the car. If the driver's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is above the preset level the car will not start.

Ignition interlocks are effective in reducing repeat drunk driving offenses by 67 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). And, all offender interlock laws are found to reduce repeat offenses significantly, when effectively implemented.



To get to the illegal .08 BAC level, a 160-pound male must drink four drinks in an hour. (A standard drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 72-proof distilled spirits, all of which contain the same amount of alcohol – about .54 ounces.)

First-time offenders are serious offenders. Research from the CDC indicates that first time offenders have driven drunk at least 80 times before they are arrested. Additionally, research has found that first offenders' patterns of recidivism are generally similar to a repeat offender.

The FACTS

- An interlock is more effective than license suspension alone, as 50 to 75 percent of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive on a suspended license.
- States requiring all convicted drunk drivers to use an ignition interlock, such as Arizona, Oregon, New Mexico and Louisiana have cut DUI deaths by over 33 percent.
- All-offender interlock laws are widespread. Twenty states, plus a California pilot program (covering a population of over 13 million) have laws requiring ignition interlocks for all first-time convicted drunk drivers.
- As of July 2013, there are approximately 305,000 interlocks in use in the United States.

MADD supports the immediate reinstatement of driving privileges for convicted drunk drivers provided the offender uses an ignition interlock for the remainder of the license suspension period. Three surveys indicate 76 to 88 percent of the public support interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers:

- 88 percent support interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers.
- 84 percent support ignition interlocks for convicted drunk drivers.
- Over 3 of 4 persons support requiring interlocks for first-time convicted drunk drivers.

In addition to MADD, other traffic safety groups support ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers, including all first offenders with an illegal BAC of .08 or greater.

- Advocates for Auto and Highway Safety
- American Automobile Association (AAA)
- Auto Alliance
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS)
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- National Safety Council
- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)

For more information about ignition interlocks, please visit madd.org/interlock.



Ignition Interlocks for All Convicted Drunk Drivers

ACROSS THE NATION

In 2011 9,878 people died and over 315,000 were injured in a crash involving a drunk driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or greater. Research shows that at a .08 BAC level, a person is 11 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than someone who has had nothing to drink.

Today 20 states require the use of an ignition interlock for every convicted offender at a BAC of .08. As a result of all offender ignition interlock legislation more than 115 million people are protected from repeat drunk driving offenders.

IN NORTH CAROLINA

Drunk driving deaths represent 30 percent of the state's total traffic deaths. In 2012, 413 people were killed and 8,471 people were injured in alcohol impaired crashes in North Carolina. And, the economic cost of drunk driving was \$3.26 billion to the state and residents. From 2006 to 2012, the economic cost for the 61,025 alcohol related-crash injuries alone in North Carolina is estimated at over \$9 billion. When coupled with alcohol related fatalities, that estimate exceeds \$20 billion.

IGNITION INTERLOCKS are currently required for refusals, repeat and first time offenders with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .15 or greater. The time is now to save lives and strengthen the law to include first time convicted drunk drivers with a BAC of .08 or greater. A September 7, 2006 report from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety details why focusing on the "hard-core" set of DWI offenders (.15 BAC or higher) is bad policy, stating: "The hard-core group isn't the whole DWI problem or even the biggest part, so it doesn't make sense to focus too narrowly on this group."

MADD supports immediate reinstatement of driving privileges for convicted drunk drivers provided the offender uses an ignition interlock for at least 12 months. Three surveys indicate 76 to 88 percent of the public support interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers:

- 88 percent support interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers.
- 84 percent support ignition interlocks for convicted drunk drivers.
- Over 3 of 4 persons support requiring interlocks for first-time convicted drunk drivers.

With the passage of an all offender ignition interlock bill North Carolina will be eligible for a Federal grant.

The FACTS

- An interlock is more effective than license suspension alone, as 50 to 75 percent of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive on a suspended license.
- States requiring all convicted drunk drivers to use an ignition interlock, such as Arizona, Oregon, New Mexico and Louisiana have cut DUI deaths by over 35 percent.
- All-offender interlock laws are widespread. Currently, 20 states, plus a California pilot program (covering a population of over 13 million) have laws requiring ignition interlocks for all first-time convicted drunk drivers.
- As of July 2012, there are approximately 279,000 interlocks in use in the United States.

First offenders are serious offenders. Conservative estimates show DUI offenders have driven drunk at least 80 times before they are arrested. Additionally, research has found that first offenders' patterns of recidivism are generally similar to a repeat offender.

Status of State Ignition Interlock Laws

CAMPAIN TO
ELIMINATE
DRUNK DRIVING
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Interlock requirement starts on the first conviction	
Mandatory with a BAC of .08 or greater	Mandatory with a BAC of .15 or greater
Alaska (1/09)	Missouri (3/14)
Arizona (9/07)	Nebraska (1/09)
Arkansas (4/09)	New Mexico (6/05)
California Pilot Program* (7/10)	New York (8/10)
Colorado (1/09)	Oregon (1/08)
Connecticut (1/12)	Tennessee (7/13)
Hawaii (1/11)	Utah (7/09)
Illinois (1/09)	Virginia (7/12)
Kansas (7/11)	Washington (1/09)
Louisiana (7/07)	West Virginia (7/08)
Maine (12/13)	

(month/year listed note effective date)

Mandatory with a second conviction	Not mandatory
Georgia (5/99)	Judicial discretion
Idaho (10/00)	California for any offender
Massachusetts (1/06)	Indiana for any offender
Mississippi (7/14)	Kentucky for any offender
Montana (5/09)	North Dakota for any offender
Ohio (9/08)	Rhode Island for repeat offenders
Pennsylvania (10/03)	Ohio
South Carolina (1/09)	DC any offender can choose to go an interlock
	South Dakota part of the 24/7 program
	Vermont any offender can choose to go an interlock

Revised July 2013

* California's pilot program covers the counties of Los Angeles, Alameda, Sacramento, and Tulare. These counties combined have a population of over 13 million.
 ** In Iowa, interlocks are required starting on the first conviction for offenders with a BAC of .10 or greater.