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WASHINGTON REGIONAL ALCOHOL PROGRAM

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February 26, 2020

Members of the Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland

**Re.: Support for "Drugged Driving – Oral Fluid Tests – Pilot Program,"
HB 808, Valentino-Smith (D-Prince George's County)**

**"Collecting drug-impaired driving data is critical
to understanding the scope of the problem."**

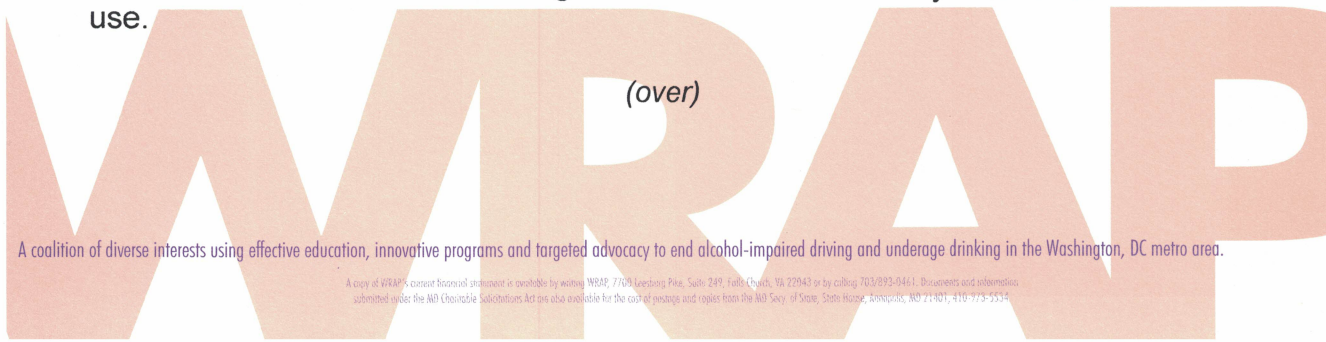
– National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ("Presence of Drugs in Drivers")

Dear Delegates:

On behalf of the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program's (WRAP) Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and the more than six-million Maryland residents we serve in the fight against drunk driving and underage drinking (including having served as project director of both Maryland's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign and "Maryland Remembers" ceremony), I wanted to formally communicate to you **WRAP's unequivocal support for House Bill 808, "Drugged Driving – Oral Fluid Tests – Pilot Program," Valentino-Smith (D-Prince George's County).**

Succinctly, HB 808 proposes the establishment of a "pilot program to examine the testing of oral fluid samples by certain police officers to assist in determining whether an individual is operating a motor vehicle while impaired by a controlled dangerous substance."

Between 2007 and 2016, the percentage of fatally injured tested drivers in the U.S. testing positive for drugs nearly doubled (25% to 42%, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [NHTSA]). In addition and according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS, "Alcohol and Drugs"), crash rates have risen in states that have legalized retail sales of marijuana for recreational use.



A coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area.

A copy of WRAP's master financial statement is available by visiting WRAP, 7700 Leesburg Pike, Suite 249, Falls Church, VA 22043 or by calling 703/893-0461. Disclosures and information submitted under the MD Consumer Substitutions Act are also available for the cost of postage and copies from the MD Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401, 410-733-2534.

2018 IIHS data shows that traffic “crashes are up by as much as six-percent in Colorado, Nevada, Oregon and Washington, compared with neighboring states that haven’t legalized marijuana for recreational use (IIHS, “Status Report”).

To better measure the prevalence of drugged driving in Maryland – comporting with the NHTSA recommendation to “strengthen drug testing by deploying screening equipment and devices, particularly as new drugs of abuse emerge” (NHTSA’s “Presence of Drugs in Drivers”) – and deploying that NHTSA testing methodology most preferred (due to its ease of collection) that being that “oral fluid has emerged as the specimen of choice to replace urine in many applications of testing for drugs of abuse” (NHTSA, “National Roadside Survey Pilot Test; Oral Fluid and Blood Analytic Procedures”), HB 808 proposes a limited, two-year pilot program deploying these roadside screens.

In 2018, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) called on state and federal regulators to “do more to tackle the growing problem as states grapple with prescription drug abuse and adopt a more permissive stance on marijuana” specifically citing that “police need better training on how to spot drivers who may be impaired and ‘oral fluid’ drug tests that police can use after pulling people over” (Insurance Journal, “National Safety Board Calls for Standards for Drugged Driving Tests”).

We concur and ask for your consideration of favorably reporting this potentially lifesaving legislation. I may be directly reached with any questions at either 703-893-0461 or at kurt@wrap.org.

Cordially,



Kurt Gregory Erickson
President