



Testimony of Dr. Darrin T. Grondel before the Maryland House Judiciary Committees.

Regarding Maryland House Bill 932 – March 3, 2021

Chair Luke Clippinger and Members of the Committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in favor of House Bill 932.

For the record, my name is Darrin T. Grondel Vice President of Government Relations and Traffic Safety for the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility or Responsibility.org. Professionally, I served 25 years with the Washington State Patrol, retiring in 2017 at the rank of Captain. In 2012 – 2020, I was appointed by Governor's Gregoire and Inslee to serve as Washington State's Governors Representative for highway safety. In that role, I led the state's efforts to address drug and multi-substance impaired driving.

Across the United States, impaired driving (drunk, drugged or in various combinations) is a far to common occurrence and the data drives the narrative for necessary changes to capture evidence to address this increasing devastating trend:

- 50.5% of fatally injured drug-positive drivers (with known drug test results) were **positive for two or more drugs** and **40.7% were found to have alcohol in their system** (NHTSA FARS as cited in Hedlund, 2018)
- Among drug-positive drivers killed in crashes, 4% tested positive for both marijuana and opioids, 16% for opioids only, 38% for marijuana only, and 42% for other drugs (Governors Highway Safety Association, 2017)
- The percentage of traffic deaths in which at least one driver tested positive for drugs has nearly doubled over a decade. (USA Today, 2016) (Source: <https://driving-tests.org/driving-statistics/>)
- The number of alcohol-positive drivers killed in crashes who also tested positive for drugs increased by 16% from 2006 to 2016 (Governors Highway Safety Association, 2017)

Evidence Collection

Collection of evidence in impaired driving cases, after the officer has established reasonable suspicion or probable cause, is critical. HB Bill 932 would allow officers trained in (ARIDE) [Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement \(ARIDE\)](#) or similar training to “request, require, or direct that a person take a certain test for drug or controlled dangerous substance content under certain circumstances.” Blood evidence is the gold standard for impaired driving cases and any officer, who has established reasonable suspicion or probable case should be able to articulate this for blood evidence.

In addition to the training provisions noted in the Bill for ARIDE and DRE training, we would also recommend highly prioritizing the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administrations Standard Field Sobriety Test Training](#). The SFST training is foundational for the other advanced trainings (ARIDE, DRE). Every officer in Maryland should be trained, at a minimum, in SFST and have refresher training be provided on a frequency determined by the state to enhance the proficiency of skills and detection.

Conclusion

Responsibility.org is in favor of HB 932 Drugged Driving – Controlled Dangerous Substance Testing – Authorized Police Officers and we offer our support or any technical assistance you may need.

The following are additional links for information in addressing impaired driving for consideration in making Maryland’s Roadways the safest in the nation:

[Multi-substance Impaired Driving](#)

[Drug Testing-in-Impaired Driving Cases](#)

[Oral-Fluid-Screening](#)

[Pre-trial Services Guide](#)

[Law Enforcement DUI Testimony Silver Tips Checklist](#)

Responsibility.org thanks you for your time and attention to the issues addressed in this written testimony and the considerations presented in making a policy decision that will improve safety on Maryland’s roadways.

Thank you

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