



**AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in Support of
HB 557 – Drunk Driving Offenses – Ignition Interlock System Program
Sponsor: Delegate Atterbeary**

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **supports** [HB 557](#), which closes a loop hole in Noah's Law. The bill mandates participation in the Maryland Interlock Ignition System Program (IISP) for those granted probation before judgment (PBJ) for driving while under the influence of alcohol or under the influence of alcohol per se, including for an offense committed while transporting a minor.
- The legislation also applies to an offender convicted of or granted PBJ for driving while impaired by alcohol, including for an offense committed while transporting a minor. This technical change to the current IISP Program is critical to safety on our roadways.
- In spite of all the strides, drunk driving continues to plague our nation and the state of Maryland, despite being a totally preventable crime.
- According to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nationally the percentage of highway fatalities associated with alcohol impairment has hovered at approximately 30% from 1995 through 2018.
- In 2019, there were 36,096 traffic fatalities nationally and 10,142 of those fatalities, or 28%, involved a driver with a BAC of 0.08 or higher. For the same period in Maryland, out of a total of 521 traffic fatalities, 167, or 32%, involved a driver with a BAC of 0.08 or higher, a 29.5% increase in alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities over the prior year. (*NHTSA, Overview of Motor Vehicle Crashes in 2019, Released Dec. 2020*)
- In a recent AAA Mid-Atlantic traffic safety poll, 24% of Maryland motorists indicated that drunk or drugged driving was their number one traffic safety concern.
- According to the *Maryland Task Force to Combat Driving Under the Influence of Drugs and Alcohol*, the use of ignition interlock systems has been shown to lead to long-lasting changes in driver behavior and the reduction of recidivism.
- The Task Force concluded that states which have extended required times for ignition interlock use for certain drunk driving offenses have experienced a 60 – 95% decrease in recidivism.
- Interlocks are no panacea, but they are another tool that, when used as part of a solution for drivers with persistent alcohol problems, can help keep them from driving after they have been drinking and, thus, save lives on Maryland roads.
- We respectfully thank this Committee for all you have done in the past to combat drunk driving and urge you to do even more by giving **HB 557** a favorable report.

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