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WASHINGTON REGIONAL ALCOHOL PROGRAM

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Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, Maryland

Re.: Support for "Drunk Driving Offenses – Ignition Interlock System Program,"
Senate Bill 528, Senator Waldstreicher (D-Montgomery County)

**"Interlocks typically are used as a condition of probation
for DWI offenders, to prevent them from driving while impaired by
alcohol after their driver's licenses have been reinstated."**

– National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), "Countermeasures That Work," 2021

Dear Senators:

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 Senate Bill 528, "Drunk Driving Offenses – Ignition Interlock System Program"** (Judicial Proceedings Committee Vice Chairman, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, D-Montgomery County).

Succinctly, Senate Bill 528 seeks to expand the universe of persons subject to Maryland's Ignition Interlock System Program to include persons put on probation for either a driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI, 21-902[a]) or driving while impaired by alcohol (DWI, 21-902[b]) violation.

(over)



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 current financial statement is available at www.wrap.org. WRAP, 7900 Westpark Drive, Suite A550, Tysons, VA 22102. Telephone and e-mail: wrap@wrap.org. Website: www.wrap.org. All rights reserved. © 2023 WRAP. All rights reserved.

According to the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) ("Maryland's Ignition Interlock Program, Status Report," 2022), more than half (50.95%) of persons (in closed cases) adjudicated for either DUI or DWI in Maryland in 2021 were granted probation in the form of probation before judgment (PBJ) and therefore NOT subject to the full universe of public protections namely participation in Maryland's proven effective interlock program.

With ignition interlock devices reducing "repeat offenses for driving while intoxicated by about 70-percent" (U.S. Centers for Disease Control) and that interlocks are proven to be "highly effective in allowing a vehicle to be started by sober drivers but not by alcohol-impaired drivers" (NHTSA), Senate Bill 528 looks to simply ensure public safety along that route used by half of persons arrested for drunk driving in Maryland by subjecting *all* 21-902(a) and 21-902(b) offenders to Maryland's interlock program as a condition of (PBJ) probation.

NHTSA data ("Countermeasures That Work," 2021) shows that "interlocks typically are used as a condition of probation for DWI offenders, to prevent them from driving while impaired by alcohol after their driver's licenses have been reinstated." The need for such in Maryland is all too clear as fiscal year 2020 MVA data shows that more than 6,100 drivers were prevented from driving after consuming alcohol last year.

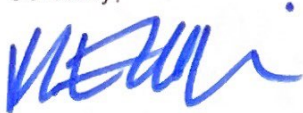
Maryland's interlock program is "an effective tool to help prevent the devastating consequences that can result when an impaired driver gets behind the wheel" (MVA). In a state where nearly a third of traffic fatalities still involve drunk drivers (30.7% in 2021, MVA), *not* using Maryland's existing -- and offender-paid -- interlock program for the full universe of DUI and or DWI offenders in the state is, at best, not using every tool in Maryland's toolbox to prevent drunk driving. At worst, it is potentially deadly as 2021 bore witness to Maryland posting increases in the number of drunk driving crashes (up 4.9%) and number of persons injured in said crashes (up 3.9%) (MVA).

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As a means of both more effectively monitoring a drunk driver's probation period in Maryland and strengthening Maryland's "Drunk Driving Reduction Act of 2016" ("Noah's Law") which "continues to have an impact on Maryland's Ignition Interlock Program and is helping to keep drunk drivers off the road" (MVA), the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program strongly supports Senate Bill 528. To that end, we also thank you, in advance, for your consideration of favorably reporting this potentially lifesaving legislation.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration. I may be directly reached with any questions at either 703-893-0461 or at kurt@wrap.org.

Cordially,



Kurt Gregory Erickson
President