



April 4, 2023

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chairman, Maryland House Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Clippinger:

On behalf of our organizations, **we strongly urge you to bring Senate 528/House Bill 451 up in Committee for a vote** to require drunk drivers arrested for a first offense DUI who are sentenced to probation before judgment (PBJ) to complete 180 days on an ignition interlock device as a condition of their probation. Ignition interlocks are **already** mandatory for people who refuse the BAC test, convicted first offenders, and repeat offenders. This legislation builds on Noah’s Law, passed in 2016, in honor of Noah Leotta. Our organizations have worked for over five years to ensure the full intent of Noah’s Law is fulfilled by passing this legislation and urge you to act before the legislature concludes its business for this session.

Recently, press articles, segments and op-eds have drawn attention to the need for this legislation and for the Legislature to act:

- [Baltimore Sun](#): Maryland must mandate ignition interlock systems for all drunken drivers
- [Baltimore Sun](#): Drunken drivers get a pass in Maryland
- [WJLA7/Fox45](#): Dad of fallen officer pushes for change in Noah's law as session winds down
- [WMAR2 Baltimore](#): Advocates angered as bill to close Noah’s Law loophole stalls in committee
- [WJZ Baltimore](#): Maryland advocates want ignition interlocks required for drunk drivers
- [Fox 45 Baltimore](#): Advocates against impaired driving testify in support of SB 528, strengthening Noah's Law
- [WBALTV 11](#): Bill to require use of ignition interlock devices seeks to close Noah's Law loophole
- [Fox5DC](#): Maryland lawmakers look to beef up “Noah’s Law”
- [NBC 4 Washington](#): ‘We're Still Here’: Supporters of Maryland Bill Try Again to Close Loophole in DUI Law

Currently, 34 states and the District of Columbia require all offenders to install ignition interlocks. Passage of this legislation would save lives and qualify Maryland for Federal incentive grant funds.

In 2021, more than half (51%) of the 9,291 DUI/DWI offenders in Maryland received PBJs. Drunk drivers are responsible for 1/3 of all of Maryland’s traffic fatalities – On average, there are 6,600 impaired driving crashes each year, resulting in nearly 3,000 injuries and 170 tragic and preventable fatalities. In 2022, Maryland’s Ignition Interlock Program **prevented 3,650 attempts** to start or operate a vehicle where the driver’s blood alcohol concentration was above the legal limit. Nationally, ignition interlocks have stopped over 29 million total attempts to drive drunk over the last 14 years.

Ignition interlocks are a cost-effective and proven solution that reduces drunk driving recidivism and helps keep our nation's roads safe for millions of motorists.

- [Studies](#) show that ignition interlocks reduce recidivism—[by up to 70%](#)— among first-time, repeat and high-risk offenders while they are installed.
- An article studying the effects of [ignition interlock laws on fatal crashes between 1982 and 2013](#) found that mandatory laws for all offenders “would have significant public health benefit” and “are more effective at reducing alcohol-involved fatal crashes than laws requiring interlocks for segments of high-risk offenders.”
- Ignition interlocks are **74% more effective in reducing DUI recidivism** than license suspension alone for first offenders during first 182 days after conviction, according to a 2016 study from the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Noah's Law is working to reduce repeat DUIs – which proves the point of this legislation. We don't want people to go on to have second and third offenses. This legislation will protect people on the roadways while still allowing drivers with DUIs to continue driving and meeting family and work obligations.

Again, please bring Senate Bill 528/House Bill 451 to a vote. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Ragina Ali, AAA Mid-Atlantic: rali@aaamidatlantic.com

Debbie Jennings, Director, Chesapeake Region Safety Council: Debbie@chesapeakesc.org

Debra Coffey, Board Director, Coalition of Ignition Interlock Manufacturers (CIIM): dcoffey@smartstartinc.com

Chris Swonger, CEO of the Distilled Spirits Council and Responsibility.org: Chris.swonger@distilledspirits.org

Dr. Darrin Grondel, Director, National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving: Darrin.grondel@responsibility.org

Lorraine Martin, CEO, National Safety Council: Jane.terry@nsc.org

Rich Leotta, Noah on Patrol: rshanoah@aol.com

Roderick Howard, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Region, Mothers Against Drunk Driving: Roderick.howard@madd.org

Dave Daggett, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, Maryland State Attorneys Association: ddaggett@mdsaa.org

Kelly Poulsen, Senior Vice President of Government Relations, Responsibility.org: Kelly.Poulsen@Responsibility.org

Rick Birt, President and CEO, Students Against Destructive Decisions: rbirt@sadd.org

Kurt Erickson, President, Washington Regional Alcohol Program: kurt@wrap.org