Chairman Horne and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today in support of Senate Bill 91 requiring ignition interlocks for all first time convicted drunk drivers with a blood alcohol concentration of .15 or greater. My name is Kathleen Bienenstein, Program Manager with the Nevada Affiliate of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) applauds the efforts of Senator Manendo in authoring Senate Bill 91 as the measure will help reform Nevada’s drunk driving law. MADD thanks the Senate for passing Senate Bill 91 on a unanimous vote last month and urges this Committee to advance this important legislation onto the Assembly floor.

MADD’s support of ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers is simple—it is about saving lives. Countless studies show that ignition interlock devices for all convicted DUI offenders is the most highly effective tool available to stop drunk driving. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) endorsed interlocks for all convicted offenders earlier this year after reviewing various studies on ignition interlocks. The CDC found that these devices reduce repeat drunk driving offenses on average of 67 percent.

As you may know, an ignition interlock is a breath test device linked to a vehicle’s ignition system. When a convicted drunk driving offender wishes to start his or her vehicle, he or she must first blow into the device. The vehicle will not start unless the driver’s BAC is below a pre-set standard. A data recorder logs the driver’s BAC for each attempt to start the vehicle. Interlocks are calibrated to have “rolling retests,” which require a driver to provide breath tests at
regular intervals, preventing drivers from asking a sober friend to start the car, drink while
driving, or leave the car idling in a bar parking lot.

Ignition interlocks will help save lives. These devices are even more effective when required for
all convicted drunk drivers. In New Mexico, drunk driving re-arrests are down statewide by 37
percent, alcohol involved crashes down by 31 percent, alcohol related injuries down by 41
percent and alcohol related fatalities down by nearly 36 percent. In Arizona, drunk driving
fatalities have dropped by 46 percent since their interlock law.

In November 2006, MADD launched its national Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving, which
includes support for all-offender ignition interlock laws. Prior to the Campaign launching in
2006, only one state, New Mexico, had a law requiring ignition interlocks for all first time
convicted drunk drivers. Now, thirteen states and a pilot program in California have laws
requiring or highly incentivizing interlock usage by all first time convicted DUI offenders.\textsuperscript{i}
Currently, eleven states have in place laws similar to Senate Bill 91.

The current interlock law in Nevada is limited to judicial discretion, repeat offenders and those
first time convicted drunk drivers with a blood alcohol concentration .18 or greater. It should be
noted that with Senate Bill 91, Judges still retain discretion and will not be mandated to require
interlocks in cases where they determine the interlock to pose too much of a “financial hardship”
to the convicted drunk driver.

Senate Bill 91 is also an economically sound public safety measure. Every life saved or injury
prevented by the device translates to millions of taxpayer dollars no longer spent subsidizing
drunk drivers. A study of New Mexico’s interlock program found the cost of an interlock was
$2.25 a day for the offender, but for every dollar invested on first offender interlock laws the
public saves three dollars.\textsuperscript{ii}

The interlock acts as a virtual probation officer riding in the front seat. It should be noted that
the convicted drunk driver pays for the device so that the taxpayer is not further burdened with
subsidizing drunk drivers.
Some may argue that requiring ignition interlocks for first time offenders is too harsh. This is not the case. We know that the average first time offender has driven drunk before—the most conservative study showed drunk drivers getting on the road an average of 87 times before the first arrest.iii

We know it is not enough to simply revoke the license of a convicted drunk driver. Studies show that 50 to 75 percent of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive even while their license is suspended. This is the reason that interlocks are so critical to protecting the public. The offender is going to drive anyway, so let's make sure that we allow them to do so in a manner that protects the public.

MADD would like to see Nevada enact legislation requiring all convicted drunk drivers to blow before they go with an ignition interlock. However, Senate Bill 91 will serve as an important step in reducing drunk driving in Nevada. For this reason, Mothers Against Drunk Driving urges this committee to support this legislation.

Enclosed is more information on ignition interlocks.

Thank you.
Alcohol Ignition Interlock Fact Sheet

Alcohol ignition interlocks save lives
- The breath alcohol ignition interlock prevents a vehicle from being driven by a drunk driver. If used correctly, the device can substantially reduce repeat offenses.\(^i\)
- If properly administered, alcohol ignition interlocks can save thousands of lives and give offenders the ability to drive without endangering the public. \(^ii\)
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) found that states requiring ignition interlocks for everyone convicted of DWI can reduce alcohol-impaired driving crashes and save lives. \(^iii\)

Studies clearly show alcohol ignition interlocks are effective
- Multiple studies on interlocks for both first-time and repeat offenders show that interlocks reduce repeat drunk driving offenses by an average of 67 percent. \(^iv\)
- Most of the failures of interlocks are legal system failures, where mandatory interlock laws are not enforced and offenders who are sentenced to receive interlocks either do not have them installed or receive little oversight. MADD’s proposed model interlock law will alleviate many of these issues. \(^v\)

The public supports the implementation of alcohol ignition interlocks
- 88 percent of the public supports the mandatory installation of alcohol ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers. \(^vi\)

First offenders are likely to become repeat offenders
- First-time arrestees have driven drunk an average of 87 times before they are arrested. \(^vii\)
- First-time arrestees are likely to have committed the crime before and will commit the crime again unless significant intervention is taken.

Current sanctions alone are not effective in stopping repeat offenses
- Currently, the most common sanctions for first-time offenders in the United States are fines, license suspensions and assessment and treatment for problems with alcohol. \(^viii\)
- Studies estimate that 50 to 75 percent of drunk drivers whose licenses are suspended continue to drive anyway. A strong alcohol ignition interlock program will prevent the suspended offender from driving. \(^ix,x\)

How interlock technology works
- An alcohol ignition interlock is a breath test device linked to a vehicle’s ignition system. When a convicted drunk driver wishes to start his or her vehicle, he or she must first blow into the device. The vehicle will not start unless the driver’s Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) is below a preset level. \(^xi\)

Expanding interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers
- MADD is undertaking an aggressive state legislative strategy to push for new state laws to require interlock use by all drunk driving offenders, including their first conviction.
- MADD’s model state legislation includes a compliance revision. An interlock should remain installed in a vehicle until an offender can adequately demonstrate sober driving.

The public supports the implementation of alcohol ignition interlocks with the following reasons:
- 88 percent of the public supports the mandatory installation of alcohol ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk drivers.\(^vi\)

First offenders are likely to become repeat offenders with the following reasons:
- First-time arrestees have driven drunk an average of 87 times before they are arrested. \(^vii\)
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through an interlock or electronic monitoring. If an offender fails a test, the offender’s interlock installation should be extended to match the initial interlock period (e.g., 150 days for a first offense).

- As of October 2010, the total number of currently installed interlocks in the U.S. is approximately 212,000. This estimate is based on data supplied by 14 ignition interlock distributors and 42 independent state estimates. That number represents an increase of 18% from the estimate of 180,000 in 2009.
- There are approximately 1,400,000 drunk driving arrests each year in the U.S. Not everyone arrested for DUI is convicted for drunk driving. There are most likely between 1 to 1.2 million DUI convictions per year.
- As of October 2010, there are approximately 700 currently installed interlocks per million residents in the U.S. (212,000 interlocks divided by 306 million residents).

# # #

i MADD, Stopping Drunk Driving Before It Starts: A Technological Solution.

ii MADD, Stopping Drunk Driving Before It Starts: A Technological Solution.


v MADD, Stopping Drunk Driving Before It Starts: A Technological Solution.

vi Center for Excellence in Rural Safety at the University of Minnesota. Survey March 23-May 6, 2010, of 1,205 registered voters who drive at least once a week. Margin of error +/-3 percentage points.


viii MADD, Stopping Drunk Driving Before It Starts: A Technological Solution.


### Status of State Ignition Interlock Laws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandatory .08 Conviction</th>
<th>Mandatory with a BAC of at least .15</th>
<th>Mandatory with 2nd Conviction</th>
<th>Discretionary</th>
<th>No Interlock Law at All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska (1/09)</td>
<td>Delaware (7/09)</td>
<td>Georgia****</td>
<td>All other states</td>
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<td>Arizona (9/07)</td>
<td>Florida (10/08)</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<td>Kansas (7/07)</td>
<td>Missouri</td>
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<td>California Pilot Program* (7/10)</td>
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<td>Montana (5/09)</td>
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<tr>
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(Months listed note laws effective date)

* California’s pilot program covers the counties of Los Angeles, Alameda, Sacramento, and Tulare. These counties combined have a population of over 14 million.

** Interlocks are highly incentivized in that, if the offender chooses not to use the device, he or she has a year long license suspension and any violation is a felony.

*** Mandatory upon license reinstatement

**** Mandatory as a condition of probation
New Mexico, Arizona, Louisiana, Illinois, Washington, Nebraska, Alaska, Colorado, Arkansas, Utah, Hawaii, New York, Oregon
