

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
SILVER BELL ACCEPTANCE AWARD
AD COUNCIL
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WASHINGTON, D.C.

I am deeply honored to share this evening with the other recipients, Chief Justice Warren Burger and Congressman Charles Rangel. I feel very humble at this hour. For it is I who should be honoring you. Through the years I've gained such respect for the Ad Council. You represent the epitome -- if the Ad Council takes on your cause, you're really in business. Of course the Ad Council was born in the zeal of a great national undertaking -- the mobilization of American strength and spirit in World War II -- and two generations later is still dedicated to making a positive difference in people's lives through service to the public.

Since the War Ad Council produced its first campaign in 1942, your great organization has championed a thousand causes, used over \$12 billion in time and space given by communications media and accomplished immeasurable good for mankind. This group is one of the most remarkable communications success stories of our century. You are truly an inspiration to us all.

In the limited time I have to serve as Transportation Secretary, I've tried to focus my efforts on those issues where I can make a difference -- a positive difference -- in people's lives. What could be a higher priority than the saving of precious lives, the prevention of crippling and disabling injuries and so much heartbreak caused by drinking and driving. It is truly my great honor to work alongside you in this noble cause. Your public service advertising campaigns have helped raise the consciousness level of the American people. Thanks to your ads, constantly hammering home the message, Americans are no longer willing to tolerate lax laws and lenient judges.

Statistics project that one out of two Americans at some time in his or her life will be involved in an alcohol-related crash. Many have lost loved ones. I lost an uncle to a drunk driver. But we don't have to accept such statistics. We can make a difference, and we really have made a difference. From 1980 through 1984 the number of fatally injured drivers who were intoxicated declined by 24 percent. Our challenge is to keep the momentum going. We must never let it die.

President Reagan supports us in this worthy objective. It was the President who personally supported and signed into law in 1984 a bill encouraging states to set 21 as their legal minimum drinking age. We normally defer to states on traffic law issues, but where a state with age 21 has a neighbor state with a lower drinking age, a positive incentive to drink and drive is produced. These "blood borders" -- where teenagers have an incentive to cross state lines to take advantage of lower drinking age laws and return home "under the influence," must be eliminated. Statistics

show that drivers between the ages of 18 and 20 are more than twice as likely as older drivers to get involved in alcohol-related accidents. In states where the drinking age has been raised, there has been an approximate reduction of 13 percent in alcohol involvement among young people. Currently, 40 states have age 21 drinking laws -- 17 states have passed laws since the President signed the bill.

And your successful campaign to get people to buckle their safety belts is saving lives every day. The best defense against the drunk driver is, truly the safety belt. I must say my decision on Standard 208, the automatic occupant protection rule, was one of the most difficult public policy issues of my career. For 15 years, administrations have been wrestling with this one. My ruling calls for automatic safety belts or air bags to be phased-in, beginning with 1987 model cars, unless two-thirds of the people in this country are covered by a state safety belt law which meets federal criteria. Currently, 23 states and the District of Columbia have passed laws requiring safety belts. For the first time in 15 years, lives are being saved under Rule 208. The overall plan is still on appeal. I'll rule on state laws when the court renders its opinion. In the meantime, we progress as each of your public service announcements broaden public awareness.

It's been my pleasure to work with an array of dedicated public figures to draw the message home to all segments of society. For example, Barbara Mandrell her appeal is quite broad -- but the Indy 500 can best reach the "good ole boys," Fred Flinstone and Mickey Mouse, the kids -- and Stevie Wonder, the young adults.

The point is, public awareness has increased because of the Ad Council's skills, cooperation and dedication. Who would have thought 15 to 20 years ago that such a climate for safety would exist today!

I'm reminded of a family who was visiting Washington for the first time. They were riding along in a taxi and the young girl, about eight, looked up at the National Archives. Over the door there is engraved in stone: "What is past is prologue." "What does that mean, daddy?" She asked. Before the man could answer the cab driver said "Honey it means you ain't seen nothing yet."

Let me ask you to remember those words. We've come a long way. It's been great. We have made tremendous progress, but let's make a pledge to America. You ain't seen nothing yet! One accident caused by a drunk driver is one too many. Let us vow not to rest until every last drunk driver is off the streets and highways of our country. One injury that could have been prevented by a safety belt is one injury too many. I welcome the chance to travel with you on this journey. For America needs it. History demands it. Our children will reward it.

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