

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ANDREW H. CARD, JR.
SOBRIETY CHECKPOINT PRESS CONFERENCE
JULY 1, 1992
WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Thank you, Ms. Milo (PRONOUNCED MY-LO) Kirk (MADD national president) for that introduction. And thanks to all MADD members everywhere for a truly remarkable 12 year partnership with the Department of Transportation -- one that certainly has reduced death and destruction by drunk drivers on our highways.
- "National Sobriety Checkpoint Week" is one of newest initiatives in this partnership.
- Our strategy has been to change and toughen the laws, see those laws enforced and reshape the attitude of people who drive.
 - Together, we supported a National Minimum Drinking Age Law and then worked to bring all states into compliance with it.
 - Together, with DADD and SADD, we supported a national designated driver program.
 - Together, we are working to convince Americans that safety belts are the best defense against drunk drivers.

- There have been other initiatives, and there will be many more. Although alcohol-related traffic fatalities dropped nearly 10 percent between 1990 and 1991-- marking the lowest alcohol fatality toll since 1982-- our work is far from finished.
- As Milo pointed out, we meet today on the eve of the deadliest holiday weekend of the year. More people are killed in highway fatalities over the July 4th weekend than at any other time.
- The carnage is senseless. If you have any doubts, ask Peg McCormick who is here from Lebanon, Connecticut. Her only two children were killed by a drunk driver on July 4, 1986.
- Or, ask George Murphy who is here from South Jacksonville, Illinois. He lost his daughter to a drunk driver on July 4, 1984. And there are thousands more relatives of such victims.
- Just yesterday I announced a new incentive grants program for states totaling \$25 million to battle drunk driving. One of the qualifications for the grant program is that the states have a statewide sobriety checkpoint program.
- These checkpoints are a tried and proven weapon against alcohol and drug impaired drivers who take to our streets and highways during the holiday.

- The public strongly supports sobriety checkpoints -- simply because they save lives.
- Many of you who are out on the highways this weekend may find more than one checkpoint -- because we mean business in keeping drunk drivers off the roads.
- Officers at those checkpoints will also be looking for drug users. And they will be checking to make sure motorists are buckled up and children are secured in child safety seats.
- In a few minutes we will test new state-of-the-art equipment to be used to detect alcohol impaired drivers. They are called Passive Alcohol Sensors.
- If you are stopped at a sobriety checkpoint this weekend, you may feel inconvenienced for a few moments. But consider yourselves lucky -- know that you are a part of a life-saving operation.
- As Secretary of Transportation, I have given my pledge to MADD and other similar organizations that the Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will do all it can to support your programs. We must keep the problem of drunk driving at the very top of our list of priorities.

- We cannot afford to rest until every last drunk driver is off our nation's highways and streets -- and sobriety checkpoint are just one more effective means to accomplish that goal.
- Remember: With safety there is no finish line.

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