



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Jesse White and MADD-National President Tout the Effectiveness of Illinois' Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device (BAIID) Law at Making Roads Safer
National study shows BAIIDs reduce repeat drunk driving by 67 percent

Secretary of State Jesse White announced today that the number of Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Devices (BAIID) installed on the vehicles of DUI offenders has quadrupled – going from 3,000 to 12,000 annually – in the two and a half years since Illinois' BAIID law took effect in 2009 targeting first-time offenders.

"I am pleased with the significant growth of the BAIID program over the last few years, which uses technology to target DUI offenders in an effort to make our roads safer, while posing no inconvenience to the vast majority of Illinoisans who are safe and responsible drivers," said White.

Additionally, White said he was encouraged with a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that showed re-arrest rates for drunk drivers drop by 67 percent after BAIIDs are installed as compared to drivers with suspended driver's licenses.

"While past studies have shown that BAIIDs are effective at combating drunk driving, this newest national study by the CDC further reinforces the importance of the use of BAIID as a tool to successfully reduce repeat drunk driving offenses," said White. "Each and every time a BAIID discourages or stops someone from driving drunk carries the potential of preventing multiple deaths or injuries on our roads."

White made the announcement at a press conference in Chicago in which he was joined by Laura Dean-Mooney, National President of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) as well as representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Illinois State Police.

"MADD commends Secretary White for his leadership in making Illinois roads safer," said Dean-Mooney. "Requiring convicted drunk drivers to 'blow before they go' with BAIIDs has proven to be the most effective way to reduce drunk driving recidivism, keeping Americans safer on our roadways."

In 2008 White's office joined forces with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to initiate Illinois' groundbreaking law to combat drunk driving through the use of BAIIDs. Effective Jan. 1 2009, the law requires all first-time DUI offenders who wish to obtain driving relief during the period of statutory summary suspension to install a BAIID on their vehicles. Motorists are required to blow into the BAIID, which measures their blood alcohol content levels. The device is designed to prevent DUI offenders from driving after having consumed alcohol.

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Most recently White's office initiated legislation in the form of Public Act 96-1526, which took effect February 14, 2011. This new law streamlines the process, making it easier and more efficient for first-time DUI offenders to enroll in the BAIID program. Prior to this change, the offender was required to have a judge sign a court order to enter into the BAIID program. Now, offenders are contacted directly by White's office about enrolling in the program and arranging for the installation of a BAIID on their vehicles. While this law change is just over four months old, it is expected to further increase participation in the BAIID program among first-time DUI offenders.

According to provisional statistics from IDOT, alcohol-related crash fatalities dropped in Illinois by five percent in 2010. The provisional data shows 355 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes last year. In 2009, 373 people died in alcohol-related crashes. For more information on crash data, please go to IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety Web site at <http://www.dot.state.il.us/safety.html>.

"Although I am pleased with the effectiveness of our state's BAIID program and its accelerated growth, as well as the decrease in alcohol-related fatalities, I am not satisfied," said White. "I want to continue working closely with MADD, NHTSA and other key Illinois traffic safety advocates as we look for additional ways to combat drunk driving and make our roads even safer."

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