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Illinois is a National Leader in its Efforts to Combat Drunk Driving

Jesse White Applauds NTSB for its recommendation that all states follow Illinois's lead and require BAIIDs for first-time DUI offenders

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White applauded the National Transportation Safety Board for its recommendation that all states require Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Devices (BAIID) on the cars of first-time DUI offenders. Secretary White initiated Illinois' cutting-edge BAIID law that took effect January 1, 2009, making Illinois the second state in the nation to do so.

"I am pleased that the National Transportation Safety Board is recommending what we in Illinois know first-hand: that BAIIDs are successful at preventing cars from being driven by drunk drivers," said White. "My top priority as Secretary of State is to make the roads of Illinois as safe as possible. To accomplish this goal, I have fought continuously for tougher DUI laws, while also significantly expanding our state's Breath Alcohol Ignition Interlock Device (BAIID) program."

Under White's leadership, Illinois' groundbreaking BAIID program requires all first-time DUI offenders who wish to obtain driving relief to install a BAIID on their vehicle. Motorists are required to blow into the BAIID, which measures their blood alcohol content (BAC) levels. The device is designed to prevent DUI offenders from driving after having consumed alcohol. Since this law took effect in 2009, the number of BAIIDs installed on the vehicles of DUI offenders has quadrupled – going from 3,000 to 12,000 annually.

"Our state's BAIID program 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.

In addition, White has initiated a series of tough drunk driving measures, including enhanced penalties for those that drive drunk with children in the vehicle; targeting repeat offenders and high-BAC offenders; and increasing the length of the statutory summary suspension from three months to six months for those offenders that failed the breath alcohol test at time of arrest and from six months to 12 months for those offenders that refused the breath alcohol test at time of arrest.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving has recognized Illinois as a national leader in the fight against drunk driving. Last year Illinois received the highest ranking possible by MADD – garnering five stars – for our state's efforts to combat drunk driving.

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