



Michigan Drunk Driving Press Conference Remarks

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Thank you, Representative Hammoud, for introducing this legislation. It's critically important to save lives and we are honored to join you.

Unfortunately, we currently don't have a groundswell of public support for lowering BAC.

Facing the impact impaired driving has had on the Abbas family and others, we know we have to do more to engage people in changing our culture and expectations around drunk driving.

That's why having Helen Witty and MADD here today is crucial.

We've partnered with MADD on a number of other issues through the years, and I know that with your support and sharing the voices of families, we can do so much more to drive support for this life-saving legislation both here in Michigan and beyond.

At the National Safety Council, we have focused on eliminating preventable deaths at work, at home, and on the road for over 100 years.

As many of you know, we take road safety very seriously. After all, it's the number one cause of workplace deaths. It's an every-day killer that affects everyone.

Driver impairment has been one of the toughest nuts to crack in eliminating roadway fatalities, and science tells us that impairment doesn't begin at .08, or even at .05.

Impairment begins with first drink.

Clearly, we need to try new things to get better results.

Michigan was one of only a handful of states that already had sanctions in place at .08 BAC in the 1980s.



Today, the Great Lake State has an opportunity to lead again on impaired driving by lowering the legal threshold to .05%.

More than 300 lives were lost on Michigan roads in 2017 because of alcohol impairment.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, that represents more than a **25% jump over 2016** – all while traffic fatalities in the state have declined somewhat in the last few years.

We need to remember these aren't just statistics. These are people.
We know victims suffer long after the crash scene is gone.

There's no magic bullet to eliminate all crashes. But, what we need is a sound approach to law enforcement, education, and enacting common sense laws.

As you've heard Helen say earlier, ignition interlocks have been really successful in checking repeat offenders.

It makes sense to use what works.

By lowering the threshold in line with best practices followed the world over, we can actually make a difference and save lives.

I am encouraged by everyone joining us today, organizations that are close partners in the Road to Zero Coalition, driven to erase roadway fatalities.

Up next you'll hear from **Jennifer Homendy**, National Transportation Safety Board member.

Thank you. Let's continue to do all we can to keep each other safe.