



Frank Harris
Director of State Government Affairs
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
House Judiciary Committee and House Transportation Committee
In support of DR 16-0124
January 21, 2016

Thank you Chair Grad, Chair Brennan, Vice-Chair Potter and Vice-Chair Jewett and members of Transportation and Judiciary committees for allowing me to testify today DR 16-0124. My name is Frank Harris, Director of State Government Affairs, for Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving supports this legislation as it allows for increased fines for drunk drivers and reinforces Vermont's approach to utilizing technology such as ignition interlocks to stop drunk driving. MADD believes this is safer and far more effective than relying on license suspension or license revocation alone as a punishment to drunk drivers.

License suspension alone is not the best approach to dealing with drunk drivers

Although this proposal addresses other aspects related to license suspension, MADD would like to discuss why we believe license suspension alone is an ineffective way to stop drunk driving.

Studies show that up to 75 percent of drunk drivers will drive on a suspended license. Instead of suspending or revoking the license of an arrested drunk driver, MADD prefers allowing these offenders to continue to legally drive via an ignition interlock. MADD supports this approach because ignition interlocks separate drinking from driving and are proven to stop repeat offenses, as demonstrated on the enclosed chart with my written testimony. License suspension alone does not separate drinking from driving and is nothing more than a hope for a best approach to deal with drunk drivers.

Increased Fines

The proposed legislation also increases the maximum fines for drunk drivers in Vermont. MADD supports holding drunk drivers accountable for their careless actions. This proposal aims to do that and is worthy of approval.

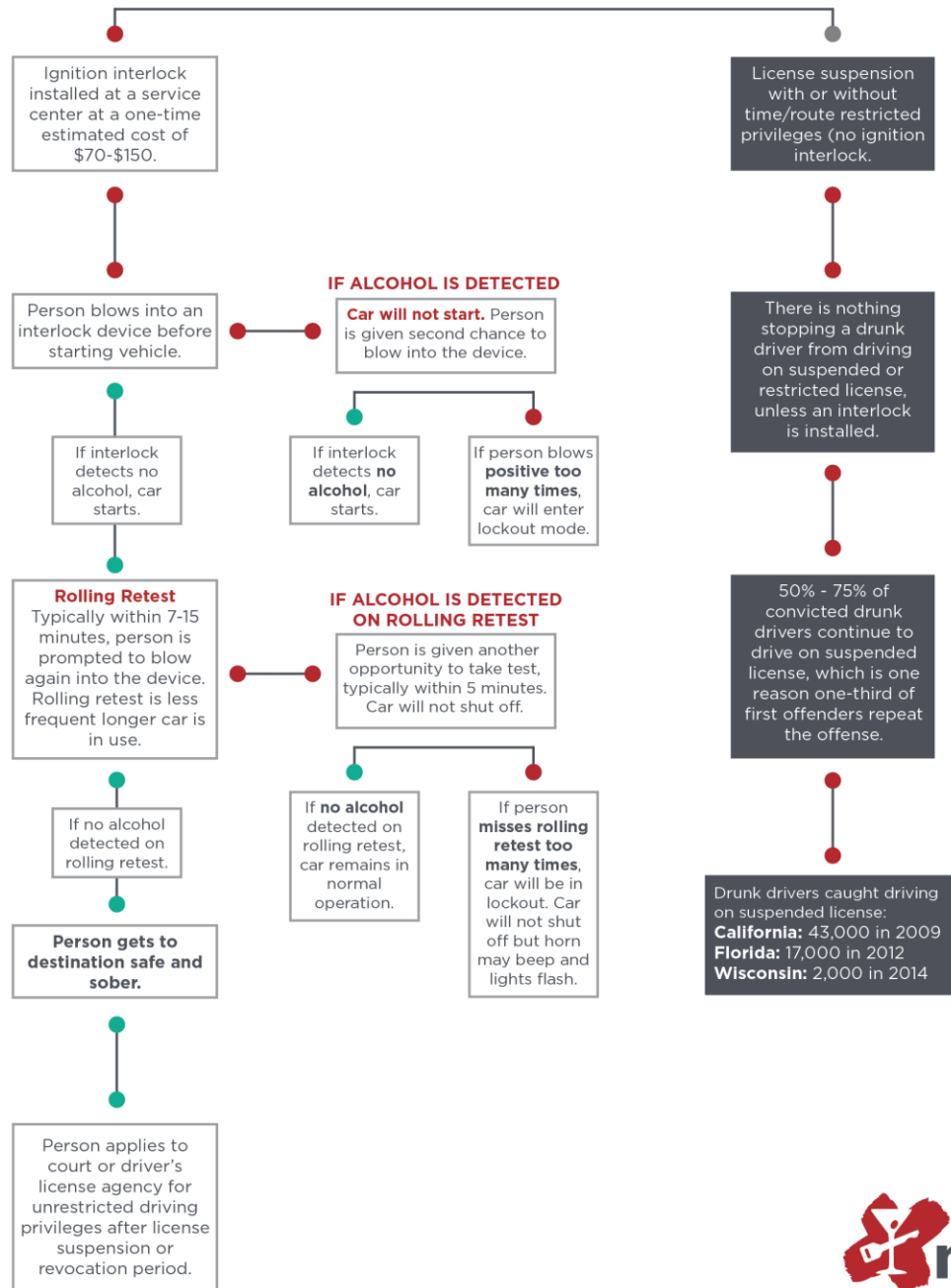
Publicize drunk driving consequences

If H 560 and DR 16-0124 advance, Vermont's Department of Public Safety and Department of Motor Vehicles should utilize federal dollars to publicize the new laws in Vermont to deter people from driving impaired. Through the various federally funded crackdown activities on drunk driving, these agencies can alert the public of the consequences of driving impaired, such as an increased fines and required ignition interlock use.

Conclusion

Mothers Against Drunk Driving supports the intent behind DR 16-0124 and we urge lawmakers to advance this proposal in the legislative process. Thank you for allowing me to speak today on behalf of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I welcome any questions you might have.

Ignition Interlock vs. License Suspension After DUI



People who use an interlock are less likely to reoffend. Compared to license suspension alone, interlocks reduce repeat offenses by 67% while the device is installed and 39% after the device is removed. Compliance Based Removal could help decrease repeat offenses even more.

MADD supports ignition interlocks for ALL apprehended drunk drivers. Interlocks accomplish what license suspension and other monitoring technologies do not – separate drinking from driving.

- **Interlock Service Center:** Person must get interlock serviced every 30 days.
- **Lockout Mode:** If person blows positive for alcohol too many times or misses a rolling test, device may need to be taken to get serviced sooner than 30 days.
- **Extra time on interlock possible.** The interlock service center may report any violations, too many positive blows or missed rolling retests to a monitoring agency which may result in extra time on interlock if the state has a **Compliance Based Removal** aspect to the interlock law. Many states require offenders to show proof of installation and/or compliance with the interlock order to the court/driver's license agency in order to have device removed.