Public Law 98-103
98th Congress

Joint Resolution

To designate the week of December 11, 1983, through December 17, 1983, as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week".

Sept. 30, 1983
[S.J. Res. 119]

Whereas traffic accidents result in more violent deaths in the United States than any other cause, over forty-four thousand in 1982;

Whereas traffic accidents cause thousands of serious injuries in the United States each year;

Whereas more than 65 per centum of drivers killed in single vehicle collisions and over 50 per centum of all drivers fatally injured have blood alcohol concentrations above the legal limit;

Whereas the Surgeon General has reported that life expectancy has risen for every age group over the past seventy-five years except for those fifteen to twenty-four years old, whose death rate, the leading cause of which is drunk driving, is higher now than it was twenty years ago;

Whereas the total societal cost of drunk driving has been estimated at over $24,000,000,000 per year, which does not include the human suffering that can never be measured;

Whereas there are increasing reports of driving after drug use and accidents involving drivers who have used marihuana or other illegal drugs;

Whereas driving after the use of therapeutic drugs, either alone or in combination with alcohol, contrary to the advice of physician, pharmacist, or manufacturer, may create a safety hazard on the roads;

Whereas more research is needed on the effect of drugs either alone or in combination with alcohol, on driving ability and the incidence of traffic accidents;

Whereas an increased public awareness of the gravity of the problem of drugged driving may warn drug users to refrain from driving and may stimulate interest in increasing necessary research on the effect of drugs on driving ability and the incidence of traffic accidents;

Whereas the public, particularly through the work of citizens groups, is demanding a solution to the problem of drunk and drugged driving;

Whereas the President has appointed a Commission on Drunk Driving to heighten public awareness and stimulate the pursuit of solutions, and this Commission has provided vital recommendations for remedies for the problem of drunk driving in an interim report in December 1982;

Whereas many States have appointed task forces to examine existing drunk driving programs and make recommendations for a renewed, comprehensive approach, and in many cases their recommendations are leading to enactment of new laws, along with stricter enforcement;

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Whereas the best defense against the drunk or drugged driver is the use of safety belts and greater safety belt usage would increase the number of survivors of traffic accidents;

Whereas an increase in the public awareness of the problem of drunk and drugged driving may contribute to a change in society's attitude toward the drunk or drugged driver and help to sustain current efforts to develop comprehensive solutions at the State and local levels;

Whereas the Christmas and New Year holiday period, with more drivers on the roads and an increased number of social functions, is a particularly appropriate time to focus national attention on this critical problem;

Whereas designation of the week of December 12, 1982, through December 18, 1982, as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week stimulated many activities and programs by groups in both the private and public sectors aimed at curbing drunk and drugged driving in the high-risk Christmas and New Year holiday period and thereafter;

Whereas the number of traffic fatalities over the three-day New Year holiday in 1982 was the lowest since 1949, with 282 deaths as compared to 338 deaths for the same period in 1981;

Whereas the activities and programs during National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week in 1982 heightened the awareness of the American public to the danger of drunk and drugged driving and contributed to the decrease in traffic fatalities: Now, therefore, be it

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the week of December 11, 1983, through December 17, 1983, is designated as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week" and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe that week with appropriate activities.

Approved September 30, 1983.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 119:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 129 (1983):
July 16, considered and passed Senate.
Sept. 15, considered and passed House.