Public Law 98-338
98th Congress

Joint Resolution

To designate the week of December 9, 1984, through December 15, 1984, as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week".

July 3, 1984
[S.J. Res. 303]

Whereas traffic accidents cause more violent deaths in the United States than any other cause, approximately forty-two thousand in 1983;

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 United States Surgeon General has reported that life expectancy has risen for every age group over the past seventy-five years except for Americans 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 Presidential Commission on Drunk Driving, appointed to heighten public awareness and stimulate the pursuit of solutions, has provided vital recommendations for remedies for the problem of drunk driving;

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 attitute 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 National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week in 1982 and 1983 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 over the last three years the number of traffic fatalities over each of the three-day New Year holidays has decreased from three hundred and thirty-eight deaths in 1981, to two hundred and eighty-two deaths in 1982, to two hundred and seventy-four deaths in 1983, the lowest number since 1949; and

Whereas the activities and programs during National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week in 1982 and 1983 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

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the week of December 9, 1984, through December 15, 1984, 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 July 3, 1984.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 303:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 130 (1984):
June 8, considered and passed Senate.
June 26, considered and passed House.