

Remarks

Administrator Strickland

for

Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.

Press Event

Washington, DC

December 13, 2010

**SECRETARY LAHOOD WILL MAKE OPENING
REMARKS AND INTRODUCE YOU**

Thank you, Secretary LaHood.

The BAC test result is one of the most important pieces of evidence in a DWI arrest. A No Refusal Program allows prosecutors to obtain evidence, including the level of alcohol and other impairing substances.

This evidence is crucial. Our data show that the most frequently recorded BAC level among drinking

drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2009 was .17, more than double the legal limit. These data also show of the 12,012 drivers who were involved in fatal crashes that year and had any alcohol in their system 84 percent had BAC levels at or above .08 (which is illegal *per se* in every State). That's more than 10,000 drivers. Even more concerning is that 56 percent (6,685) had a BAC level at or above .15 (which is considered to be High BAC level in many States).

I am particularly alarmed by the fact that drivers with a BAC of .08 or higher involved in fatal crashes were eight times more likely to have a prior conviction for

driving while impaired (DWI) than were drivers with no alcohol ...eight times.

There are other benefits to the No Refusal Program.

Chief among them is that it decreases the breath test refusal rate and may decrease the number of trials.

Breath test refusals are a long-standing, widespread problem for States.

Very importantly, while the No Refusal program makes a bold statement about a jurisdiction's commitment to DWI enforcement, it also guarantees

suspect's due process rights. Test specimens are preserved for independent verification.

Now, whether your State has a No Refusal Program or not, law enforcement will be out *in force* during this Holiday season, putting themselves at risk to prevent a drunk driver from killing or injuring innocent motorists or themselves. Our "Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest." Crackdown will run through New Year's weekend.

If you are going to partake of some Holiday cheer with friends and family this season and you don't want to

end up in jail, plan ahead and designate a sober driver.

Now, I'd like to ask Laura Dean Mooney of Mothers Against Drunk Driving to say a few words.

(LAURA DEAN MOONEY)

Remarks

(ADMINISTRATOR STRICKLAND)

Now I would like to ask Sheriff Webre to make a few remarks about his experience in LaFourche County.

(ADMINISTRATOR STRICKLAND)

**Now, I'd like to ask Warren Diepraam to tell us about
Texas experience with the No Refusal Program.**

(WARREN DIEPRAM)

Remarks

(ADMINISTRATOR STRICKLAND)

Thank you. We'll take your questions now.

