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.05  
SAVES LIVES

## **Support Senate Bill (SB) 754. Lowering the limit of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) while driving to .05% will deter drunk driving and save lives on Hawaii roads.**

### **The Issue:**

- In 2019, there were 108 fatalities on the state's roads and at least one third of those deaths (36) involved alcohol-impaired drivers (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)).
- Research and laboratory evidence find that most adults are significantly impaired at .05% BAC. When behind the wheel of a car, driving skills are degraded resulting in reduced coordination, decreased ability to track moving objects, difficulty steering and diminished response to emergency driving situations.<sup>i</sup>
- The risk of being killed in a single-vehicle crash with BACs of .05 to .079% is seven to 21 times higher than for drivers without measurable alcohol.<sup>ii</sup>
- Since the mid-1990s, the percentage of drunk driving fatalities has plateaued, indicating that progress has stagnated.<sup>iii</sup> New solutions are urgently needed.

### **The Economic Costs:**

- Traffic crashes cost Hawaii taxpayers over \$575 million annually.
- According to 2010 NHTSA data, in the U.S. these tragic yet preventable crashes resulted in \$201 billion in comprehensive costs to society. When this figure is adjusted solely for inflation, it amounts to more than \$241 billion in 2020.
- Motor vehicle crashes cost U.S. employers up to \$47.4 billion annually in direct expenses. Drunk driving crashes cost employers \$6 billion each year. Nearly 83% of drunk driving costs to employers, \$5 billion, are due to "off the job" alcohol use.<sup>iv</sup>

### **Early Data From Utah:**

- Early data from Utah, which began enforcing a .05% BAC law on December 30, 2018, is promising.
- In 2019, the number of alcohol-impaired driving fatalities dropped 37% (2018: 62 and 2019: 39). The percentage of traffic fatalities involving an alcohol-impaired driver dropped as well (2018: 24% and 2019: 16%).<sup>v</sup>
- In 2019, alcohol consumption and tourism in the state went up and the total number of arrests for alcohol-impaired driving decreased.<sup>vi</sup>

### **A Proven Solution:**

- Advancing .05% BAC legislation will dissuade dangerous drinking and driving across all levels of impairment as well as curb needless highway deaths and injuries that threaten all road users.<sup>vii</sup>
- If all states adopted a .05% BAC or lower law, our nation would experience an 11% decline in fatal alcohol crashes and 1,790 lives would be saved.<sup>viii</sup>
- A Texas Medical Center Health Policy Institute national poll found that a majority of Americans (55%) approve of lowering the BAC limit while driving to .05%.<sup>ix</sup>
- Research published in the American Journal of Public Health concluded, "BAC 0.05 laws are ethically desirable because they are likely to prevent substantial harm with minimal restrictions. Policy-makers in other states should follow Utah's lead to reduce alcohol-related traffic deaths and Congress should incentivize these changes."<sup>x</sup>

**Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, KidsAndCars.org, Liam's Life Foundation, National Safety Council and .05 Saves Lives Coalition Urge You to Advance SB 754.<sup>xi</sup>**

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**Additional Groups That Have Adopted, Support or Recommend .05% BAC Policy:**

- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Public Health Association (APHA)
- Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM)
- FIA Foundation
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM)
- National Road Safety Foundation
- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
- Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID)
- Safe States Alliance
- Society for Public Health Education
- Transportation Alternatives
- Vision Zero Network
- World Health Organization

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<sup>i</sup> MADD, *What is .08?* Available at: <http://www.madd.org/drunken-driving/about/understanding-08.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Fell, Jim C., Voas, Robert B, *The effectiveness of a 0.05 blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for driving in the United States*, PIRE. June 2014.

<sup>iii</sup> NASEM, *Getting To Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities - .05% BAC Safety Brief*, 2018.

<sup>iv</sup> Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) *Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes to Employers – 2015*, June 2016.

<sup>v</sup> 2019 State Traffic Safety Information, Utah, NHTSA, available at: <https://cdan.nhtsa.gov/stsi.htm#>.

<sup>vi</sup> Leaver, Jennifer, *The State of Utah's Travel and Tourism Industry 2019*, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute University of Utah, September 2020.

Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Annual Reports 2018, 2019 and 2020, available at: <https://abc.utah.gov/about-dabc/annual-reports/>.

*17<sup>th</sup> Annual DUI Report to the Utah Legislature*, Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, 2019, available at:

<https://le.utah.gov/interim/2019/pdf/00004834.pdf>.

<sup>vii</sup> NTSB, *.05 BAC Safety Briefing Facts*, February 2017.

<sup>viii</sup> NORC: Fell JC & Scherer M, Estimation of the Potential Effectiveness of Lowering the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Limit for Driving from 0.08 to 0.05. Grams per Deciliter in the United States, 2017. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2E5pIiq>.

<sup>ix</sup> Governing.com, *How Drunk Is Too Drunk to Drive?* October 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Et1r6C>.

<sup>x</sup> Morain S, Largent E. Ethical Acceptability of Reducing the Legal Blood Alcohol Concentration Limit to 0.05. *Am J Public Health*. 2019 May;109(5):709-713. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2018.304908. Epub 2019 Feb 21. PMID: 30789764; PMCID: PMC6459633, available at

<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304908>.

<sup>xi</sup> Similar legislation is also pending including SB 634 and House Bill 651.