



ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY

May 20, 2026

The Honorable Jared S. Polis
Governor of Colorado
Office of the Governor
State Capitol Building
200 E. Colfax Avenue, Rm. 136
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Governor Polis:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs, supports House Bill (HB) 1242 to upgrade the ignition interlock device (IID) law and respectfully requests you sign it into law. HB 1242 would require IID use by all convicted drunk driving offenders as a condition of license reinstatement by closing a loophole which enables certain first-time offenders to wait out license suspension without getting an IID. Additionally, the bill would enable drunk drivers who refused to be tested to install IIDs sooner. These safety upgrades are critical and timely.

Drunk driving is a deadly and costly threat to Colorado families. In 2024, 204 people were needlessly killed in drunk driving crashes in Colorado, accounting for 30 percent of traffic fatalities, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).¹ These tragic, preventable crashes also created a national financial burden of \$69 billion in economic costs in 2019.² When updated for inflation only, that equates to \$89.2 billion in 2026 dollars.³ Clearly, this is a serious issue which requires urgent attention and the effective solution of increasing IID utilization.

IIDs are saving lives in the Centennial State. Information from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) on the effectiveness of IIDs notes that they prevented 10,503 attempts to drive drunk in Colorado in 2024 and 180,195 attempts from 2006 to 2024. Research shows that IIDs reduce recidivism with decreases in subsequent arrests ranging from 50 to 90 percent while the IID is installed on the vehicle.⁴ HB 1242 would improve the effectiveness of the IID program and help prevent drunk driving.

A common misconception is that most people who are convicted of their first drunk driving offense are social drinkers who made one mistake. However, studies show that the average first offender will have driven drunk 87 times before getting arrested.⁵

The American public strongly agrees that the use of IIDs is needed to address this public health crisis. Polling shows 69 to 88 percent of Americans support requiring ignition interlocks for all convicted drunk driving offenders, even if it's their first conviction.⁶ Furthermore, 82 percent of drunk driving offenders themselves believe the IID was effective in preventing them from driving after drinking.⁷

In 2024, an average of one alcohol impaired driving fatality occurred every 44 minutes in the U.S. resulting in a total of 11,904 deaths.⁸ These can and must be stopped. We appreciate your consideration and ask you to sign HB 1242 to save lives.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

¹ State Traffic Safety Information for Colorado, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.

² The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at

<https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.

- ³ CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, Jan. 2019 to Jan. 2026, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
- ⁴ Ignition Interlocks – What You Need to Know: A Toolkit for Policymakers, Highway Safety Professionals, and Advocates Second Edition (updated November 2019), NHTSA, Nov. 2019, DOT HS 811 883, available [here](#).
- ⁵ Drinking and Driving Trips, Stops by the Police, and Arrests: Analyses of the 1995 Survey of Drinking and Driving Attitudes and Behavior, NHTSA, Dec. 2000, DOT HS 809 184, available at https://rosap.nhtl.bts.gov/view/dot/1779/dot_1779_DS1.pdf.
- ⁶ MADD, How Technology Has Stopped 1.77 Million Drunk Drivers: A State by State Guide to Creating a Future of No More Victims, February 10, 2016; available at <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/57396/4/>.
- ⁷ Morse, BJ and DS Elliott. Hamilton County Drinking and Driving Study: 30 Month Report. Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado, 1990.
- ⁸ Overview of Motor Vehicle Crashes in 2024, NHTSA DOT HS 813 791, April 2026, available [here](#).