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State Medical Society of Wisconsin

Advancing the health of the people of Wisconsin

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TO:

Representative Jeff Stone, Chair

Members, Assembly Highway Safety Committee

FROM:

Kathy Andersen, Associate Director

Government Relations

RE:

Support for AB 142, relating to Ignition Interlock

Devices

DATE:

September 15, 1999

On behalf of the 8,000 members of the State Medical Society of Wisconsin, I would like to convey the physicians' support for Assembly Bill 142.

Wisconsin has gained the disturbing reputation of being a state with heavy drinkers. Our state has had the highest per-capita consumption of beer and brandy in the nation. A study done by Princeton University showed that Wisconsin ranked number one in the nation for binge drinking among the general population.

Wisconsin youth have also become reckless about alcohol consumption. Alcohol abuse on the state's campuses has become excessive and deadly. Because of a Harvard University study that reported the University of Wisconsin-Madison as the second hardest-drinking school in the nation, the American Medical Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation included the UW in their grant program to reduce youthful binge drinking on and off campuses.

Probably the most disturbing news is that a Center for Disease Control study identifies Wisconsin as the state with the third highest number of alcohol impaired driving episodes. In 1995 and 1996, 43% and 44% respectively, of all traffic fatalities in our state were alcohol-related.

Drinking and driving has become an extremely serious threat to the safety and well-being of our residents. The state must do more to ensure that those individuals who are most at risk of driving under the influence of alcohol not operate a vehicle. AB 142 is necessary and we encourage the committee to vote in support.

August 24, 1999

Representative David Cullen Room 216 North State Capitol VIA INTER-D MAIL

Dear Representative Cullen:

Thank you for your letter regarding Assembly Bill 142, which strengthens the ability of courts to order the installation of ignition interlock devices (IID) in vehicles owned by convicted drunk drivers. I share your support for increased usage of IIDs, and am hopeful that legislation that will help us reach that goal will be signed into law this session.

As you know, I authored Assembly Bill 221, a comprehensive drunk driving bill which makes several changes to current law that are aimed at the increasing problem of repeat drunk drivers and highly intoxicated offenders. AB 221 allows a court to order the installation of an IID for any drunk driving offense, and requires the Department of Transportation to promulgate rules establishing a state-wide IID program to be run by the Department.

The Assembly, on a 96-3 vote, passed AB 221 on May 19th. While I was heartened by the overwhelming bipartisan support the bill received in our house, it appears that our colleagues in the Senate are not see eager to take up this important legislation.

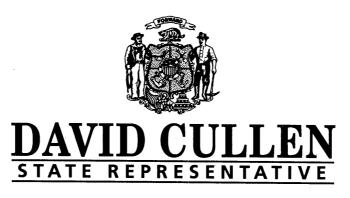
AB 221 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Insurance, Tourism, Transportation and Corrections, chaired by Senator Breske. I have asked Sen. Breske to hold a hearing on AB 221, but have received a response from his office gret.

I would welcome the chance to work with you to move this important, bipartisan bill through the Senate, and look forward to working with you and other legislators concerned about the ever-increasing problem of drunk driving to help get AB 221 signed into law.

TURNOU THE SENDER AND Sincerely,

Jeff Stone State Representative 82nd Assembly District

JS/mp



August 23, 1999

Representative Jeff Stone, Chair Committee on Highway Safety Room 306 North State Capitol

Dear Representative Stone, Line

I am writing in regard to 1999 Assembly Bill 142, a proposal I authored and introduced on February 25, 1999, and which has been referred to the Assembly Committee on Highway Safety.

As you are aware, AB 142 strengthens the ability of a court to order the installation of ignition interlock devices for convicted drunk drivers and allows the court to do so after the individual's first conviction, or upon their refusal to submit to a blood alcohol concentration test.

Like you, I firmly believe that we must strengthen our drunken driving laws to make Wisconsin's streets and highways safer. For that reason, I am requesting that the Assembly Committee on Highway Safety hold a public hearing and executive session on AB 142 as soon as possible. Moving the bill through the committee process now will allow the full Assembly to consider the legislation as soon as we reconvene this fall.

I look forward to hearing from you on this request and working with you to strengthen our drunken driving laws with the passage of Assembly Bill 142. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

DAVID CULLEN State Representative 13th Assembly District