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National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Driving by people impaired by alcohol or other drugs is one of our Nation's most serious public health and safety problems. Each year, drunk and drugged drivers cause tens of thousands of highway fatalities and hundreds of thousands of injuries. In 1985, for instance, more than half of all highway deaths were alcohol-related.

Each of us must help reduce this carnage through an awareness of what can be done, a commitment to do the right thing, and a refusal to tolerate drunk and drugged driving. We need to detect and stop impaired drivers before they cause an accident. We must insist upon strict law enforcement and swift and sure penalties and ensure that the privilege of driving is withdrawn when a drunken driver deliberately endangers others. We must not wait until personal tragedy strikes to become involved.

Statistics show that a disproportionate number of our young people are involved in alcohol-related accidents and that raising the legal drinking age reduces alcohol-related crash involvement among young drivers. Most States commendably have raised their legal drinking age. The Federal government continues to encourage States to establish 21 as the minimum age at which individuals may purchase, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages. We can all be grateful for the efforts of dedicated citizen volunteers in creating the growing awareness that motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death among young people.

More and more informed, concerned citizens are getting involved in generating awareness, education, and action to remove drunk and drugged drivers from our roads and highways. With the continued involvement of private citizens working together, and action at all levels of government, we can begin to control the problem of drunk and drugged driving.

In order to encourage citizen involvement in prevention efforts and to increase awareness of the seriousness of the threat to our lives and safety, the Congress, by Public Law 99-447, has designated the week of December 14 through December 20, 1986, as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of December 14 through December 20, 1986, as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week. I call upon each American to help make the difference between the tragedy of alcohol-related motor vehicle accidents and the blessings of full health and life. I ask Americans to show concern and not to permit others to drink or take drugs and drive.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 15th day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eleventh.

Ronald Reagan