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MARYLAND GOVERNOR SIGNS
BILL CRACKING-DOWN ON DUI OFFENDERS
WITH CHILDREN IN CAR

***NEW LAW WILL SUBJECT INCREASING NUMBER
OF OFFENDERS TO IN-CAR BREATHALYZERS***

Annapolis, MD, May 15 – Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley (D) today signed into law a bill mandating ignition interlock devices for persons convicted of alcohol-impaired driving while transporting a child.

Introduced for the third consecutive year by Delegate Sam Arora (D-Montgomery County), House Bill 1015 expands Maryland's current universe of offenders subject to ignition interlock devices to include persons convicted of drunk driving while also transporting a minor [21-902(A)(3) or (B)(2)]. The measure passed both Maryland's House of Delegates and Senate receiving unanimous votes in each chamber.

"On average, someone in Maryland is arrested every 19 hours for impaired driving while also transporting a minor," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), registered Maryland lobbyist and proponent of HB 1015. ***"Maryland's newest DUI law will address both this egregious crime and the fact that such unlawful actions are on the rise in Maryland."***

The University of Maryland's National Study Center for Trauma and Emergency Medical Systems cited that Maryland recorded 465 arrests in 2012 for driving while impaired by alcohol and or drugs while also transporting a minor. The National Study Center's findings also conclude that the crime of DUI [21-902(A)] in Maryland whilst transporting a minor is on the rise as citations for such have increased by double digit figures (20.94%) between 2009 and 2012.

In 2011, Maryland's General Assembly passed legislation, now Maryland law, requiring the installation of in-car breathalyzers otherwise known as ignition interlock devices for a minimum of six months for persons in the state convicted of either: drunk driving with a .15 or higher BAC level; twice convicted of drunk driving within five years; or convicted of drunk driving while under the age of 21 years.

Arora's bill, which becomes Maryland law on October 1st, would add to that universe of persons subject to Maryland's interlock requirements persons convicted of driving either "under the influence of alcohol" (21-901[a]) or "while impaired by alcohol" (21-902[b]) while also transporting a person under 16 years of age.

"Maryland law already requires this proven effective technology for persons deemed willful or wanton via their conscious disregard for the rights and safety of others," said Erickson. ***"Today's signed bill looks to simply include a growing population of equally egregious DUI offenders currently escaping Maryland's newest drunk driving sanction."***

Founded in 1982, the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide®.

For more information, visit WRAP's web site at www.wrap.org.

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