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MARYLAND READIES TO RATCHET-UP PENALTIES **FOR MOST SERIOUS DRUNK DRIVERS**

NEW LAW GOES INTO EFFECT NEXT WEEK ALLOWING DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION FOR CERTAIN FATAL DUIS

Annapolis, MD, Sept. 22 – Effective next week, a new goes into effect in Maryland allowing for driver's license revocation for certain fatal drunk driving crashes.

Passed unanimously by both Maryland's House of Delegates and Senate earlier this year and signed into law by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (R) in May, the state's newest DUI law is scheduled to go into effect next Thursday (October 1) and builds on Maryland's current administrative license revocation (ALR) penalties.

While current Maryland law allows for the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration to administratively suspend the driver's license for persons arrested for driving while under the influence of alcohol (DUI) including the imposition of 45 and 90-day suspension periods for DUI offenders with blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of .08 or more and 90 and 180-day suspensions for DUI offenders with .15 or higher BACs, new minimum-mandatory suspension periods for persons involved in fatal crashes with these same BACs increase to:

- **.08+ BAC** Six-month suspension for first offense; one-year suspension for second or subsequent offense
- **.15+ BAC** One-year suspension for first offense; revocation for second or subsequent offense

(These penalties are in addition to others for DUI in Maryland which include, even for first-time offenders, fines up to \$ 1,000, incarceration up to one-year and mandatory ignition interlocks for persons convicted with a .15 or higher BAC, amongst other sanctions.)'

"While there's still more that Maryland could and should do to legislatively address drunk driving, this new law is certainly a step in the right direction to combat a killer responsible for nearly a third of the state's highway deaths," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the Maryland nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program

(WRAP), registered Maryland lobbyist and proponent of this year's House Bill 430ⁱⁱ which resulted in next week's new law.

The prompt and mandatory suspension of a driver's license for alcohol and other drug test failure (or refusal) otherwise known as ALR receives the highest rating as a proven effective countermeasure to drunk driving by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).ⁱⁱⁱ

In fact, NHTSA data has found that ALR laws "reduced fatal crashes by approximately nine-percent during high-risk (late night) periods of alcohol involvement."^{iv}

House Bill 430 was sponsored by Delegates William Folden (R-Frederick County) and Kathy Afzali (R-Carroll and Frederick Counties).

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Maryland recorded 141 alcohol-impaired traffic fatalities on its roadways in 2013. Such drunk driving deaths represents 30-percent of all highway fatalities in Maryland that year.^v

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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ⁱ WRAP's 2015 "Corporate Guide to Safe Celebrating and Safe Driving," <http://wrap.org/pdfs/2015CorporateGuide.pdf>

ⁱⁱ 2015 Maryland General Assembly House Bill 430,
<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?id=hb0430&stab=01&pid=billpage&tab=subject3&ys=2015RS>

ⁱⁱⁱ NHTSA's 2013 "Countermeasures That Work," <http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf>

^{iv} NHTSA's "Traffic Safety Facts [Laws]: Administrative License Revocation," 2008,
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/DOT/NHTSA/Communication%20&%20Consumer%20Information/Articles/Associated%20Files/810878.pdf>

^v NHTSA's 2013 Alcohol-Impaired Driving Traffic Safety Fact Sheet, <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/812102.pdf>