



Testimony of

National Transportation Safety Board

Before the

House Transportation Committee & Senate Transportation Committee
The Pennsylvania General Assembly

– On –

Ignition Interlock Devices

–

Harrisburg, PA • May 6, 2025



An Independent Federal Agency

Chair Ward, Chair Neilson, Minority Chair Flynn, Minority Chair Benninghoff, and members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony regarding our ignition interlock recommendations.

The NTSB is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in the other modes of transportation—railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. We determine the probable causes of the accidents and events we investigate and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences. In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate. We also serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

Progress toward addressing alcohol-impaired driving has stalled. In 2023, there were 12,429 alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in the United States. Although this is a decrease from the peak number of impaired-driving fatalities in 2021 and 2022 due largely to COVID-19, it is still the third highest annual number of fatalities since 2007. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania alone lost 321 lives to alcohol-impaired driving in 2023, accounting for 27 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities.¹

In our 2012 report, *Wrong-Way Driving*, and our 2013 report, *Reaching Zero-Actions to Eliminate Alcohol-Impaired Driving*, we found that installing interlocks on the vehicles of all convicted DWI offenders would reduce crashes caused by alcohol-impaired drivers. Therefore, in our report on wrong-way driving, we recommended Pennsylvania require that ignition interlock devices (IIDs) be installed in the vehicles of all drivers convicted of driving while intoxicated (DWI), and then reiterated this recommendation in our 2013 *Reaching Zero* report ([H-12-45](#)).² Also in our 2013 report, we recommended that Pennsylvania establish administrative license suspension or revocation laws that require drivers arrested for DWI to use an alcohol ignition interlock on their vehicle for a period of time before obtaining full license

¹ The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) [Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool](#) (FIRST) reports drivers as alcohol impaired when their blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is .08 g/dL or greater. However, in 2023, an additional 2,118 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes in which a driver had a BAC of .01 to .07 g/dL.

² National Transportation Safety Board. 2012. [Wrong-Way Driving](#). Highway Special Investigation Report NTSB/SIR-12/01. Washington, DC.

reinstatement ([H-13-10](#)).³ Both of these recommendations are currently classified Open–Unacceptable Response.

Evaluation of ignition interlock programs over the last two decades has consistently found that IIDs effectively reduce recidivism among drivers convicted of DUI or DWI, sometimes by as much as 62 to 75 percent. Research also shows IID laws may have a general deterrent effect that discourages individuals from driving impaired before ever receiving a DUI or IID.⁴ Additionally, a study released by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety found that laws requiring IIDs for all impaired-driving offenders reduce the number of drivers with blood alcohol concentrations at or above .08 g/dL involved in fatal crashes by 26 percent, compared with no law.⁵

More can—and should—be done to prevent impaired-driving fatalities. The NTSB believes that the only acceptable number of deaths on our roads is zero, and it has been our charge since our founding to determine how to achieve that goal. Deaths due to impaired driving are 100-percent preventable, and mandating the use of IIDs for all DUI offenders will prevent impaired driving and save lives on Pennsylvania roads.

We appreciate your work to strengthen Pennsylvania’s ignition interlock laws and encourage you to consider H-12-45 and H-13-10 and take the necessary steps to require all DUI offenders to use IIDs.

³ National Transportation Safety Board. 2013. [Reaching Zero: Actions to Eliminate Alcohol-Impaired Driving](#). Safety Report NTSB/SR-13/01. Washington, DC

⁴ Zeithammer Robert, James Macinko, and Diana Silver. Assessing the Deterrent Effects of Ignition Interlock Device. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. January 2025.

⁵ Teoh Eric R., James C. Fell, Michael Scherer, and Danielle E.R. Wolfe. State alcohol ignition interlock laws and fatal crashes. *Traffic Injury Prevention*. October 2021.