

Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6960 of November 27, 1996

The President

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is a scourge on our society that we cannot ignore or treat lightly. Drunk and drugged driving has no geographic limits; it is a problem that afflicts cities and rural areas alike in every region of our country. And, most disturbing of all, it is a growing problem—last year, alcohol-related traffic deaths increased for the first time in a decade. Each of us and our loved ones are at risk of becoming victims of a driver impaired by drugs or alcohol. However, we can solve this problem if we make a national commitment to do so.

Two months ago, we charted a course that demands that those who drive must assume the responsibility of staying sober and drug-free behind the wheel. Targeting our youngest drivers first, we began by requiring, as a condition of receiving Federal highway funds, that every State pass a law making it illegal for anyone under 21 to drive with alcohol in their bloodstream.

Now, we must take the next step toward ridding our highways of drunk drivers.

Drivers between 21 and 34 years of age are most likely to drive under the influence of alcohol or other mind-altering drugs. We must not only redouble our efforts to educate those in this age group about the terrible risks posed by drunk and drugged driving, but we must also strengthen our law enforcement efforts to make clear that this behavior will not be tolerated.

Addressing impaired driving by teens and young adults is important but, unfortunately, is not enough to solve the problem. No age group is immune to the temptation to drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Through peer pressure and education, we must convince all who would get behind the wheel drunk or drugged to change their behavior.

All of us can do our part to reduce the tragic loss of life and limb caused by drunk and drugged drivers. Parents can thoughtfully and candidly discuss the dangers with their children who drive; more States can pass Zero Tolerance laws; more citizens can prevent friends or acquaintances from getting behind the wheel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol; and more of us can volunteer to be “designated drivers,” pledged to abstain from alcohol when we are with others who might be drinking. By making clear that drunk and drugged driving is unacceptable and by resolving firmly to stop it, we can prevent thousands of tragic deaths and injuries each year.

I ask all Americans to observe a special day of remembrance of the victims of drunk and drugged driving by participating this year in “National Lights on for Life Day.” On Friday, December 20, I ask that drivers nationwide keep their headlights illuminated to call attention to this threat to the health and safety of our citizens. And I ask that we rededicate ourselves as a Nation to preventing drunk and drugged driving in our communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim December 1996 as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. I urge all Americans to recognize the dangers of impaired driving; to take responsibility for themselves and others around them; to stop anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs from getting behind the wheel of a vehicle; and to help teach our young people about the lifesaving benefits of safe driving habits.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".

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