



January 26, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the current and former National Presidents of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), we have lost precious children, beloved siblings and nephews in drunk driving crashes and have been injured ourselves by drunk drivers. Combined, we have devoted more than 250 years to advancing policies and programs aimed at saving other families from the grief and pain that we have endured.

Since MADD began in 1980 — and changed the way our nation deals with deaths and injuries from the preventable crime of drunk driving — alcohol related fatalities have been reduced by 52 percent. But despite MADD's progress, there are still more than 10,000 people killed and more than 300,000 injured by drunk drivers each year and estimates from your Department show that all highway fatalities are increasing, including those involving drunk driving.

We are sure you agree that this is not acceptable.

Fortunately, there is hope on the horizon. We are heartened and thrilled that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, signed by the President on November 15, 2021, includes an advanced drunk driving prevention rulemaking requirement that we believe can finally end drunk driving. We commend the bipartisan safety leaders in Congress who fought hard for inclusion of this requirement in the final legislation.

We are proud that our current MADD National President, Alex Otte, was present at the infrastructure bill signing ceremony at the White House with those bipartisan safety leaders and many others. She was able to personally thank President Biden on behalf of the one million drunk driving victims that MADD has served since our founding.

We respectfully request that you ensure your Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issues a final rule for passive advanced drunk driving prevention systems within three years — by November 15, 2024 — with installation in new vehicles beginning two to three years later, per the timeline specified in the infrastructure legislation.

We recognize that this is an aggressive rulemaking schedule, but there are several factors that support this schedule (and possibly even more expeditious action) to complete the process:

- More than 9,400 lives will be saved annually when the technology is available in all vehicles, according to an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study. This projected number of lives saved is exceeded only by the number saved by seat belt use.
- Drunk driving prevention technologies already exist. MADD documented more than 241 examples in a May 2021 filing in response to NHTSA's Request for Information, including driving and driver monitoring and alcohol detection systems.
- These safety systems will also help to reduce other forms of impairment and hazardous driving, including distracted, drugged and drowsy driving, saving even more lives.
- The lead auto industry representative with the NHTSA/industry R&D program for alcohol detection technology, the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety (DADSS) program, recently stated that "the group's (breath and touch-based) technology is expected to be ready within the timeline spelled out by Congress" ([Washington Post, November 9, 2021](#)). Congress provided additional financial support for this program, and we hope that the bulk of it will be deployed to support the rulemaking requirement.

Again, we respectfully ask that you take a personal interest in this rulemaking action and ensure its timely completion. Your leadership and oversight will hasten the day when America can celebrate No More Victims of drunk driving.

Sincerely,

Alex Otte
MADD National President

Jan Withers
MADD National President, 2011-2014

Glynn Birch
MADD National President, 2005-2008

Wendy Hamilton
MADD National President, 2002-2005

Millie Webb
MADD National President, 2000-2002

Karolyn Nunnallee
MADD National President, 1998-1999

Katherine Prescott
MADD National President, 1995-1997

Micky Sadoff
MADD National President, 1988-1991

Cc: Polly Trottenberg, Deputy Secretary of Transportation
Steven Cliff, Acting Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Ann Carlson, Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Missy Cummings, Safety Advisor, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration