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<https://publichealth.nc.gov/chronicdiseaseandinjury/fta/index.htm>

Of the 1147 children 14 and younger killed nationally in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2017, 220 children (19%) died in alcohol impaired driving crashes.<sup>i</sup>

**We request an estimated \$200,000 in recurrent funding to help reduce child fatalities due to impaired driving. These funds would be used to increase the number of sobriety checkpoints and to increase the number of drug recognition and standardized field sobriety test trainings for law enforcement personnel.**

In addition to fatalities from alcohol-impaired driving, there have been increases in drug-impaired driving involving marijuana, opioids, and other substances alone or in combination with alcohol. The percent of fatally injured drivers that tested positive for drugs has increased by 28% over the last decade.<sup>ii</sup>

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) recommends publicized sobriety checkpoint programs as an effective intervention to reduce alcohol-impaired driving (strong evidence rating). The recommendation by the Task Force is based on a systematic review of all available studies that was conducted—with oversight from the Task Force—by scientists and subject matter experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with a wide range of government, academic, policy, and practice-based partners. Both the Task Force recommendation and evidence review are included in the May issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

This proposal involves new updated legislation to address funding needs and requires state-level attention because it is a state-wide problem.

The Forensic Tests for Alcohol Branch (FTA) in the NC Division of Public Health is responsible for and provides comprehensive training programs to law enforcement personnel in the detection and apprehension of impaired drivers. An increase in funding will enable the FTA Branch to increase training of law enforcement officers in the detection, apprehension, and prosecution of drivers impaired by alcohol or other drugs thereby reducing the number of unintentional child fatalities in the state.

The FTA Branch also provides resources including seven purpose-built vehicles (BAT Mobile Units), staffed by trained FTA employees. These are fully equipped mobile breath test sites that have three to six evidential breath test instruments and the equipment necessary to fully process impaired drivers at roadside sobriety checkpoints.

We seek additional state funds to support activities described above. In the past, the CFTF supported efforts to raise fees for this purpose. A fee is required of drivers charged with impaired driving offenses to reinstate their license after the mandatory 30-day civil revocation which is imposed at their first appearance. Raising funding in this manner will not cause the

state additional cost but will amend the existing statute to increase fees that provide adequate funding to carry out the duties of law enforcement officers in the detection, apprehension and prosecution of impaired drivers and continue to provide staffing and equipment for use by law enforcement officers at sobriety checkpoints. We recognize there are other avenues to address impaired driving such as increased or earlier interlock use and effective treatment programs such that we would also consider it reasonable to include this request as part of a broader effort.

This is a NC problem, which requires NC resources to address and mitigate. We are unaware of similar laws in other states. All required infrastructure is currently in-place in FTA.

We believe organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving, NC Association of Chiefs of Police, and the NC Sheriffs' Association would be interested, but we are still in the process of reaching out to confirm. None of the organizations identified have yet expressed interest and willingness to actively advance this issue OR take a leadership role in advancing this issue.

An additional key stakeholder may be the Bar Association. They may have some interest in this proposal due to their clients being burdened with additional expenses related to an impaired driving charge and may raise concerns about it.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812630>

<sup>ii</sup> [https://www.ghsa.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/GHSA\\_DrugImpairedDriving\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ghsa.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/GHSA_DrugImpairedDriving_FINAL.pdf)