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National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Nothing is more devastating to a parent than the call from a police officer that a son or daughter has been injured or killed in an auto accident. Nothing is more tragic than to learn that a drunken or drugged driver was at fault.

Each year, more than 25,000 of our citizens, a large number of them young people, are killed as a result of alcohol- or drug-related highway accidents. Seventy times a day—every 23 minutes—a life is taken somewhere on our streets and highways because driving skills and judgment were impaired by alcohol or drugs. Too often, a repeat offender is involved and, too often, society has looked the other way.

Today, thanks to a growing public outcry and the efforts of concerned citizens and safety leaders, the problem of drunken and drugged drivers is gaining national attention. State legislatures are enacting tougher laws and courts are imposing stiffer penalties. The Presidential Commission I appointed last April is reinforcing these efforts and encouraging greater preventive and corrective programs. Congress recently passed legislation setting Federal standards and providing incentive funds to assist in the crusade against the human and economic waste which results from drunken driving.

The holiday season, traditionally a high fatality period, affords us the opportunity to join even more emphatically in a concerted national commitment to reduce the threat of drunken and drugged drivers on our highways.

Collisions involving drunken drivers are the nation's single greatest killer of young people. This holiday season we can give our children a great gift by doing everything we can to keep the drinking driver and the drug-user off our roads. Let us all observe *safety* and celebrate *safely*, and let us remember that the safety belt in our car can be our best defense against drunken and drugged drivers.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Senate Joint Resolution 241 (Public Law 97-343), do hereby proclaim the week beginning December 12, 1982, as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Awareness Week. I call upon each of you to observe this week with appropriate activities in your homes, offices, schools, and communities. I ask all Americans to join in a national campaign to eliminate drunken and drugged driving and to prevent tragedy from intruding on our joyful holiday season.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 13th day of December, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

Ronald Reagan