



# MADD

Activism | Victim Services | Education

Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
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Testimony of  
Bill Lewis  
Public Policy Liaison  
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Before the  
Texas Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security

On the Driver Responsibility Program  
October 13, 2010

MADD has supported the Driver Responsibility Program, but recent reports have shown that the program needs to be changed.

We supported the program because it was designed to make drunken drivers pay for some of the harm they inflict on the public by imposing fees on driving while intoxicated offenders that would help fund trauma centers.

We have seen nothing that shows the program helps deter drunken driving. How could the program deter drunken driving since the public appears to be unaware of it?

The Legislature may change the program by eliminating it. MADD will support eliminating the program only if the Legislature replaces the funding trauma centers would lose if the Program is eliminated. If the Legislature eliminates the program but does not replace the funding for trauma centers, then the cost of maintaining trauma centers will fall on local taxpayers and paying patients at the hospitals.

The Program may be hindering prosecution of DWI offenders because the high fees dissuade offenders from accepting a plea offer from prosecutors. Prosecutors do not have the authority to waive or modify the DRP fees. Offenders say they will just take their chances at trial, where they may get lucky and be acquitted, which puts a burden on courts and prosecutors.

MADD will continue to focus its legislative efforts on evidence-supported measures that help eliminate drunken driving. Those measures include providing guidelines for law enforcement agencies to conduct sobriety checkpoints and requiring all convicted drunken drivers to use ignition interlock devices.

The best way MADD can help hospitals and trauma centers is by working to reduce drunken driving so that fewer people need the services of trauma centers.