

**The Landscape of Federal and State Legislation
Making Ignition Interlock Systems a Policy Priority
Presentation
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Presentation Outline

The landscape of Federal and State Legislation and Making Ignition Interlock Systems a Policy Priority is one that suggests great opportunity. And, with MADD's policy emphasis over the next ten years focusing on this critical intervention around Drunk Driving, we have an opportunity to both inform and shape policy that includes ignition interlocks.

What intrigues me most about MADD's announcement and the interest in this topic, as evidenced by the number of individuals attending this conference, is the role of technology as an intervention. Increasingly, the underage drinking and the drunk driving advocacy community are turning to technological solutions as an enhancement to environmental changes or policies that prevent these problems in our communities. Major discussions are taking place around the use of electronic age verification technology to break the backbone of the fake I-D industry, which is a \$25 billion industry in this country. If we can implement that intervention we will have contributed significantly to limiting youth access to alcohol at the point of sale.

These technological solutions are promising but it will require a different mindset in the advocacy community. A number of years ago I was introduced to a concept that has greatly influence my thinking about organizational change. I was flying from DC to Dallas and had the opportunity to upgrade. At the time I was working for the National Crime Prevention Council. I like to plow through work when I fly. It is usually uninterrupted time. Not this flight. Next to me was a gentleman who saw the McGruff logo on my papers. He looked at the logo and asked me one of those questions that defy an easy or short answer: "You are in crime prevention – if you don't mind me asking – what is prevention?" I knew this

was going to be a long conversation. I jumped in and began my explanation. He seemed satisfied and then he told me he too was in prevention. I asked him what he did for a living. He told me that he was the chief design engineer for the Tomahawk Cruise Missile System. "If that is prevention, then I would like your budget," I responded. "How is that prevention," I asked. He asked me if I had ever heard of the concept or term from business or advertising called "disruptive technology." The answer was "no." Disruptive technology is any intervention that requires the recipient to change or modify their behavior to adjust to a current condition. He explained. Imagine thousands of years ago, there existed two villages. Village A and Village B had lived side by side for years. Suddenly, Village B decides to throw a rock into Village A. Shocked and confused Village A had to adjust its environment and culture to cope with the reality and future possibility of Village B throwing rocks. They make the necessary adjustments in their community that prepared them for rock throwing by Village B. Then suddenly, somebody in Village B decides to shoot an arrow. Village A was prepared for rocks but not arrows. This forced Village A to make adjustments to this new threat. The arrow was a disruptive technology that changed the nature of the relationship. Through out the history of civilization change has come about with the introduction of new technologies forcing the environment to make necessary and appropriate adjustments.

We may be in the same position in the substance abuse prevention field. In fact, my new friend on the plane asked me what the new technologies or the next disruptive technology is in the area of prevention. I am still wrestling with that question. We are not trained to think that way in the prevention field. We need to be. I think MADD is on to something and I think the folks looking into electronic age verification technology may be on to something. These technologies clearly interrupt the pattern of behavior that has developed or evolved in the fields of underage drinking or drinking and driving.

Our goal is to move from research to Policy. Ignition Interlocks require a public discussion or discourse about this intervention.

1. Good ideas must become part of the public discourse

2. Public discourse shapes policy priorities
3. Our chances are in both authorization and appropriations
4. What is the most effective communications strategy to move from research to policy?
5. Incentivizing the Process
6. Being Intentional About a Hill Strategy

This is a “big hairy idea” and big hairy ideas require champions. We need to focus on strategies that will develop the right champions to move legislation. It may be time for Congress to consider major legislative initiatives around the technology of prevention. A federal strategy should include the following elements:

1. Incentive Grants to organizations and communities to encourage technological innovation.
2. Research and Evaluation Grants to investigate and assess the effectiveness of technology in substance abuse prevention, intervention, and enforcement.
3. Horizon Grants to promote the collaboration between the research and technology fields to identify future technology needs and potential interventions.

The field should not rest on its current accomplishments. While states are beginning to explore the utility of ignition interlock systems and an amazing 100,000 cars currently have the technology installed, it is only the tip of the iceberg.¹ Policymakers do not fully understand the technology, nor do they see its potential for saving lives. To that end, the private sector and the research community need to engage the issue by doing the following:

1. Meet with Congressional delegations and conduct demonstrations of the technology.

¹ See slides that accompany this presentation for a review of federal and state legislation currently adopting ignition interlocks.

2. Meet with advocacy groups to place this on the agenda of their legislative platforms.
3. Meet with editorial boards of local newspapers and inform them of the effectiveness and research associated with this technology
4. Continue to work with industry groups to develop cost-effective applications of the technology.
5. Promote the development of a technology association that would come together to advance this agenda.

With MADD's involvement and alcohol industry support for the application of this technology there is a significant chance that this technology could be adapted nationally. It will require, however, a national strategy that includes the mobilization of scientists, researchers, advocates, victims and industry representatives.