



February 12, 2026

Support SB 455 (Wimberger) to help stop impaired driving

The Honorable Van Wanggaard
Chairman, Senate Public Safety and Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Wanggaard and Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee Members,

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) thanks you for your leadership in crafting impaired driving reform measures. Your efforts are saving lives, preventing injuries and bringing down OWI recidivism. MADD urges your support of SB 455 by Senator Wimberger as this measure will ensure fourth time offenders utilize an ignition interlock following a conviction. MADD urges you to please hold a hearing on this proposal as we believe SB 455 will make the OWI law more effective in protecting Wisconsin residents.

What is an ignition interlock? An ignition interlock is a device about the size of a smart phone that is wired into the ignition system of a vehicle. If an interlock user is drunk, the vehicle will not start. Interlocks cost around \$3/per day to lease. Under current law, if the person is indigent, they are eligible for a reduced cost. If their annual income is less than 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), they pay only half of the regular cost of interlock installation and monthly service fee. The interlock vendors — not taxpayers — cover these costs. The FPL is adjusted annually and depends on the number of people in the household.

Why MADD supports SB 455 over license suspension only—even for fourth time offenders.

Interlocks are more effective than license suspension. According to a meta-analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, interlocks reduce repeat drunk driving offenses by 67 percent. An ignition interlock is more effective than license suspension alone, as up to 75 percent of convicted drunk drivers continue to drive on a suspended license. With SB 455 the public is better protected. SB 455 is a better approach than hoping for the best with license suspension alone.

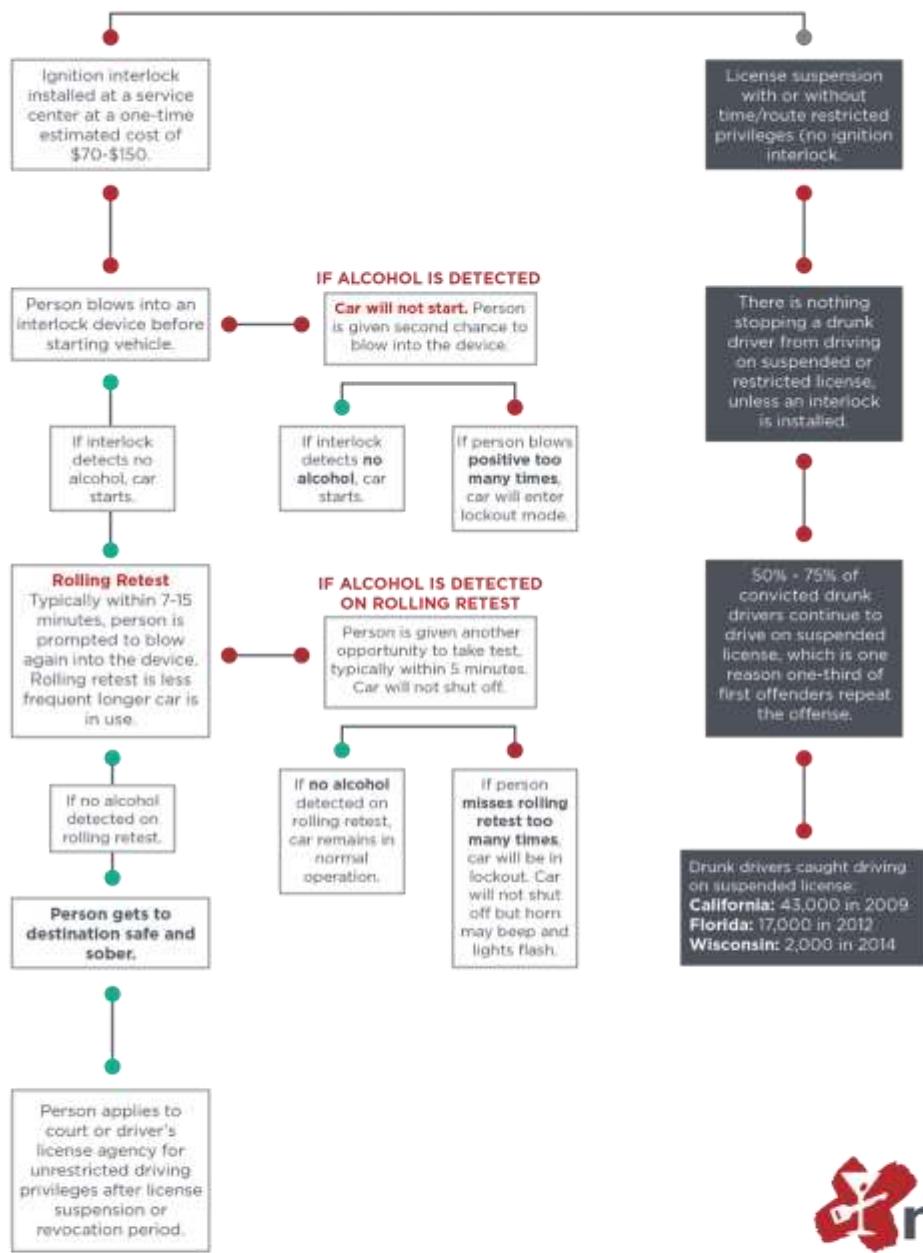
Over the past 17 years, ignition interlocks have prevented over 431,000 attempts to drive drunk with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or greater in Wisconsin, including over 20,000 attempts in 2023 alone. This shows the power this device has to prevent drunk driving.

MADD urges you to please advance SB 455. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at Frank Harris at frank.harris@madd.org or 202-688-1194. Enclosed is more information on the effectiveness of ignition interlocks versus license suspension. This chart summarizes why MADD would rather repeat offenders, even fourth time offenders, utilize an ignition interlock over license suspension alone. Thank you in advance for your prompt consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Frank Harris
MADD Director of State Government Affairs

Ignition Interlock vs. License Suspension After DUI



People who use an interlock are less likely to reoffend. Compared to license suspension alone, interlocks reduce repeat offenses by 67% while the device is installed and 39% after the device is removed. Compliance Based Removal could help decrease repeat offenses even more.

MADD supports ignition interlocks for ALL apprehended drunk drivers. Interlocks accomplish what license suspension and other monitoring technologies do not — separate drinking from driving.

- **Interlock Service Center:** Person must get interlock serviced every 30 days.
- **Lockout Mode:** If person blows positive for alcohol too many times or misses a rolling test, device may need to be taken to get serviced sooner than 30 days.
- **Extra time on interlock possible.** The interlock service center may report any violations, too many positive blows or missed rolling retests to a monitoring agency which may result in extra time on interlock if the state has a **Compliance Based Removal** aspect to the interlock law. Many states require offenders to show proof of installation and/or compliance with the interlock order to the court/driver's license agency in order to have device removed.