



April 12, 2023

Support AB 158 to close a drunk driving law loophole

The Honorable Nancy VanderMeer
Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee

Dear Chair VanderMeer and Assembly Transportation Committee Members,

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) urges you to support and hold a hearing on AB 158 by Representative Moses, which would make Wisconsin the 46th state to join the Driver License Compact to ensure justice for victims of impaired driving.

What is the Driver License Compact? The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators states the “Driver License Compact was created to provide uniformity among the member jurisdictions when exchanging information with other members on convictions, records, licenses, withdrawals, and other data pertinent to the licensing process.”

Why joining the Driver License Compact is important to MADD? Wisconsin’s lack of participation in the Driver License Compact hinders the rights of victims of impaired driving and makes it difficult to hold impaired drivers accountable.

Included in this letter are examples of how Wisconsin’s lack of participation in the Driver License Compact impacts the rights of victims of impaired driving. MADD urges you advance AB 158 by Representative Moses to make Wisconsin the 46th state to join the Driver License Compact. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact me at Erin.Payton@madd.org or 630-541-6099 ext. 7751. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Erin Payton
MADD Wisconsin Regional Executive Director

Austin Lockwood story as shared by his mother Sheila Lockwood

Austin Lockwood was murdered by a drunk driver on June 10, 2018, this is the day I was sentenced to life without my oldest son. The crash took place in Three Lakes, WI. Austin went up to Three Lakes to HELP a friend clean up a cabin. His reward for his kindness...the drunk driver took Austin's life. Because Wisconsin is NOT part of the DLC, Illinois was not aware of this crash/homicide. The killer never had his license suspended or revoked. The driver even received a TICKET for using a handheld device in September of 2019, one month before sentencing. Not only does he drive impaired, but he also drives distracted. Illinois Secretary of State advised me they were made aware of this crash on November 1, 2019, 17 months after killing my son. They were made aware by me. This is the day I contacted the Secretary of State to ask questions. Why was that killer driving around until he went to jail? Illinois Secretary of State informed me the license should have been suspended. They further told me the killer had given up his Illinois license and NOW had a valid Wisconsin license! He had moved to Wisconsin and the state of Wisconsin provided him a valid driver's license. The drunk driver that killed my son had a license until he was taken away in handcuffs on October 10, 2019.

Dr. Vincent C. Rizzo, Mary C. Rizzo, Dr. Michael J. Rizzo as shared by the Rizzo family

On April 5, 2019, our family was forever changed when our father, Dr. Vincent C. Rizzo, mother, Mary C. Rizzo and uncle, Dr. Michael J. Rizzo were killed in a tragic car crash in Kenosha County. Our shock quickly turned to anger when we learned five minutes before the start of the wake that the individual who was driving the truck that crashed into our family had a .316 BAC.

This anger became absolute disbelief and confusion when we learned that this driver had a lengthy driving record which included having his Illinois Driver's License suspended by a Wisconsin Court in 2005. However, Illinois has no record of being notified of this suspension at that time because Wisconsin is not a part of the Driver License Compact which Illinois uses to track problem drivers. The driver obtained a new Illinois Driver's License just a few days later by simply stating he had lost his and went on to renew it several more times by indicating on each renewal application that it had not ever been suspended by any other state. Illinois took him at his word. He was never punished and simply went on with this life. Illinois was eventually notified of the suspension 14 years later – five days after the crash. A little too late... Maybe things would have been different if he had been punished the first time and if the laws that are in place were enforced. We'll never know.