



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

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Governor Richardson Signs Bills to Fight Drunk Driving *Signs Interlocks for Out-of-State DWI Offenders, Day Case Fix*

SANTA FE-Governor Richardson has signed six key bills aimed at keeping repeat drunk drivers off our streets, improving convictions of drunk drivers and protecting New Mexico's families.

"Fighting DWI is my top priority and these new laws will make life tougher for drivers with out of state DWI convictions and tighten rules to ease DWI prosecutions," said Governor Richardson. "While the incidence of drunk driving still remains too high, this series of new laws will help put more drunk drivers behind bars, put more ignition locks on convicted offenders (new to new Mexico), pilot new methods of preventing drunk driving collisions, and invest more money into local DWI efforts."

Two years ago, New Mexico led the country by requiring ignition interlocks on all convicted DWI offenders. **House Bill 126/Senate Bill 437 Interlocks for Certain Out-of-State Drivers** assures that out-of-state offenders must comply with New Mexico's ignition interlock law. This bill was the top recommendation of the Governor's DWI Strike that was appointed in November 2006.

Currently in New Mexico it is unlawful to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or more. **Senate Bill 440 DWI Chemical Test Limits** allows judges or hearing officers to admit blood or breath-alcohol tests into evidence by establishing a three-hour window within which tests can occur. This new law will help district attorneys use evidence more effectively to prosecute drunk drivers.

Other anti-DWI bills signed include:

HB 266 Liquor Tax Distribution to Local DWI Fund

This bill will change the distribution to provide an additional \$5 million dollars of the liquor excise tax to address local DWI efforts.

SB 121 Prevention of Wrong-Way Highway

This bill will invest in a pilot project to review means of using spikes to prevent wrong-way access on highway off ramps. The New Mexico Department of Transportation is currently conducting a pilot project using solar power reflectors to warn drivers entering the off ramp.

SB 591 Interlock Program Confidentiality

This bill holds government employees to high standards of confidentiality to assure that personal information obtained about individuals in connection with drivers' licenses, permits, vehicle titling or registration or identification remains private.

“I have worked tirelessly on the issue of drunk driving—appointing a DWI Czar, toughening penalties and developing programs in the areas of law enforcement, ignition interlock, public awareness, and education,” said Governor Richardson. “MADD has recognized New Mexico by awarding us an “A” grade for our efforts against DWI.”

In recent months, Governor Richardson directed state officials to investigate and penalize airlines operating without state liquor licenses, promoted alcohol server training for flight attendants, increased funding for local law enforcement and launched a statewide #DWI hotline.