



April 20, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

Drugged driving is a problem on our roadways nationally, but Oregon has unique and difficult challenges ahead. In addition to legalizing the use of recreational marijuana, with the passage of Ballot Measure 110 we have also now decriminalized the use of controlled substances such as meth, heroin, cocaine, LSD, etc. We are fighting an uphill battle against drug impaired driving, and with the passage of Ballot Measure 110 we believe the worse is yet to come.

Fighting drugged driving is imperative for traffic safety. According to NHTSA, 57% of fatally injured drivers had drugs and/or alcohol in their system – 17% had both.¹ A survey of teen drivers indicated more than a third wrongly believe they drive safer while under the influence of cannabis.² The drug showing the greatest increase among drivers from 2007 to 2013/2014 was marijuana (THC). The percentage of THC-positive drivers increased from 8.6 percent in 2007 to 12.6 percent in 2013/2014, a proportional increase of 47 percent.³ In 2019, in Oregon, there were 125 drug only fatalities and 108 alcohol/drug fatalities. Just five years prior, in 2014, those numbers were 49 drug only fatalities and 31 alcohol/drug fatalities.⁴

Drugged driving is a fast growing problem, and we must utilize every tool at our disposal to combat this. Law enforcement cannot solve it alone, drug treatment programs cannot solve it alone, and we are years away from vehicle technology that could prevent the tragedies that occur as a result of drugged driving crashes. We believe a key strategy in fighting drugged driving is through prevention education. Educating our youth before they are engaged in behavior that can lead to tragic consequences gives them the tools they need to make safer choices. Clear Alliance has created an excellent curriculum and has been successful in connecting with schools to provide this critical education to our youth.

MADD Oregon respects the work that Clear Alliance does in the area of drug impaired driving education and prevention. We urge you to continue to support Clear Alliance and the important work they are doing here in Oregon. This situation brings to mind the old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." We believe educating the youth will help prevent future victims and save lives.

Respectfully,

Cate Duke
Programs Manager
MADD Oregon

¹ (NHTSA, 2010)

² (Liberty Mutual/SADD poll of 1,708 teens in the 11th and 12th grades. Margin of error is +/- 2.16 percentage points.) Janet Loehrke, USA TODAY.

³ (NHTSA 2013-2014 Roadside Survey)

⁴ ODOT