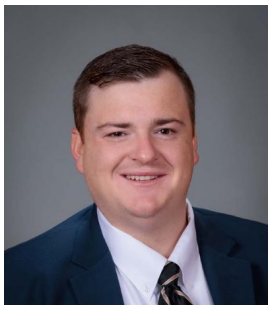
STATE OF ARKANSAS
House of Representatives



Newsletter From Rep. Zack Gramlich
District 50

August 16, 2024

Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

As we approach Labor Day, it's crucial to highlight a significant initiative aimed at making our roads safer. From August 16 through September 2, including the Labor Day holiday weekend, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will partner with Arkansas law enforcement for the "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" high-visibility enforcement campaign. This effort is designed to deter impaired driving and prevent the tragic accidents that have marked previous Labor Day weekends.

To underscore the importance of this campaign, consider the statistics from 2022. During the 2022 Labor Day holiday period (from 6 p.m. on September 2 to 5:59 a.m. on September 6), there were 490 traffic crash fatalities across the nation. Alarmingly, 39% of these fatalities (190) involved a drunk driver, and 25% involved drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) nearly twice the legal limit (.15+ BAC). For drivers aged 18 to 34, the numbers are even more concerning—47% of those who died in crashes during the holiday were driving with a BAC of .08 or higher.

Here in Arkansas, we are committed to reducing these preventable tragedies. In 2022, our state saw 643 traffic fatalities, 153 of which involved drivers with a BAC of .08 or higher. Over the Labor Day weekend alone, we lost five lives in traffic accidents, one of which was caused by a drunk driver.

The Arkansas General Assembly has taken steps to strengthen our laws concerning drunk driving. In 2019, we passed Act 783, making it a Class C felony for anyone who recklessly causes serious injury to another person while driving under the influence.

The Arkansas Highway Safety Office offers several recommendations to ensure your safety:

–Designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.
–If you see a drunk driver on the road, call 9-1-1.
–If you know someone about to drive while impaired, help them find another way to reach their destination.
–Always wear your seat belt. It's your best defense against a drunk driver.

For more information on impaired driving, visit www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving or contact the Arkansas Highway Safety Office at (501) 618-8136. Additionally, learn about Arkansas' "Toward Zero Deaths" campaign at https://www.tzdarkansas.org/ as we work together to eliminate preventable traffic fatalities.

Stay safe this Labor Day—don't drink and drive.

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