



February 23, 2021

Drunk Driving Offenses – Ignition Interlock System Program HB 749 - SUPPORT

Dear Chair Luke Clippinger, Vice Chair Vanessa E. Atterbeary, and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of the Coalition of Ignition Interlock Manufacturers, I want to thank this committee for the opportunity to provide support testimony for HB 749. The Coalition of Ignition Interlock Manufacturers (CIIM) is composed of the nation's leading companies that manufacture ignition interlock devices that prohibit impaired persons from starting their vehicle. Our shared goal is to provide state administrators, courts, and policy makers the tools necessary to keep our roads and highways safe from drunk drivers.

Why Probation Before Judgement?

Ignition interlocks prevent recidivism. The numbers in Maryland and nationally are clear. The earlier an ignition interlock device is put on, the greater the impact in reducing recidivism. The Maryland Task Force to Combat Driving Under the Influence of Drugs and Alcohol showed that the use of ignition interlock devices has been shown to lead to long-lasting changes in driver behavior and the reduction of recidivism. The task force advised that a minimum of six months of failure-free use is needed to significantly reduce recidivism, and that when ignition interlocks were required, ***recidivism reduced by at least 60% and as much as 95%***. Although this report is from 2008, a 2016 study in California found ***ignition interlocks are 74% more effective in reducing DUI recidivism than license suspension alone for first offenders during first 182 days after conviction***. This study also found that interlocks are 45% more effective in preventing a repeat DUI incidence when compared to license suspension alone during days 183 to 365 after conviction. (Many first-time offenders have the device removed after 182 days of use.) Ignition interlocks are 70% more effective than license suspension alone in preventing repeat offenses for second-time offenders, compared to license suspension alone, for the first 364 days of use. ***A 2011 CDC review of 15 national studies found that re-arrest rates decreased by a median of 67% when interlocks were required.***

Ignition Interlock Costs

As you have heard in past years, the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration runs the Ignition Interlock System Program, including approving ignition interlock manufacturers who contract with the state to provide services to eligible participants. Currently, there are eight certified manufacturers in Maryland, and part of all of their contracts is a requirement to provide reduced rates to participants that are declared eligible by MVA.

By regulation, all service providers must install a device for eligible participants within 10 days of a request and provide a toll-free 24-hour emergency response number for participants. The cost to install an ignition interlock device typically range from approximately \$70 to \$150, depending on the provider. Many providers offer discounts for fees associated with initial installation and account set up. Average cost for monthly monitoring ranges from approximately \$75 to \$100; these costs are comparable to fees charged by providers in other states. Participants can request an administrative program fee waiver and/or reduced provider fees if they meet certain eligibility requirements.

Indigent Program + Eligibility

There are currently *14 programs* in Maryland that qualify for financial need, i.e., SSI, Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Emergency Assistance to Families. There is a form (DC.212) on the MVA Website along with information about how a participant can access the affordability program. We have attached a copy of the form with our testimony for reference.

The MDOT MVA will waive the \$47 enrollment fee for all participants who provide documentation that they are on medical or food assistance. For individuals receiving assistance from any of the 14 programs found on the form, interlock providers are required to offer the ignition interlock at a 50% of their normal rental rate for customers who are on federal food stamps.

Once MVA determines eligibility, the provider is notified, and the participant receives interlock at a 50% discount. With 8 manufacturers, providers are already offering their services competitively at discounts to encourage participants to install with their company. ***On average participants at a reduced fee receive free installation and monthly lease rate averaging \$41.49 a month or \$1.38 a day.***

Recommended Changes to Improve Affordability

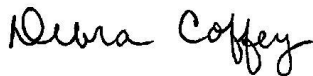
We recommend changing the name of the program from “Indigent Program” to the “Affordability Program.” We applaud the MVA for their efforts to providing more information on their website to increase participation in the indigent program. We support Marylanders who need it to have an easy and quick path to eligibility, be accessible to anyone qualified and not require additional workload or employees.

We believe that it is important that our customers have ownership in the program toward their success; a reduced fee, provides them with some accountability of the equipment and program, while also allowing our small Maryland business contract shops to stay in business.

As an Association, we are prepared to do our part to improve affordability for qualifying individuals in the indigent program and would support the MVA making a change to eliminate installation and removal fees we typically charge as part of our services. We have also taken steps to ensure all our Maryland providers are educated about the fund and providing every customer with information to ensure that if they qualify, they are enrolled.

We stand ready to provide any support, assistance or technical information regarding interlocks and the Interlock program in Maryland. We ask for a favorable report for **HB 749**.

Respectfully submitted,



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