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AWARE Coalition Members

TO: MEMBERS OF THE WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE
FROM: LISA MARONEY, UW HEALTH/AWARE
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As some of you know a newly created statewide coalition has been formed to increase public awareness of alcohol abuse in Wisconsin, reinforce responsible alcohol use and stress solutions to problems related to alcohol abuse. Below are some key facts. We look forward to working with you on improving the health and safety of all residents.

1. Alcohol abuse and its consequences is a public health crisis in Wisconsin. Rates of alcohol dependence, alcohol abuse, and alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities are higher in Wisconsin than in the United States as a whole.
2. Wisconsin leads the country with the highest U.S. rates of alcohol consumption, binge drinking and heavy drinking.
3. 457,000 adults and adolescents or about 10% of the population need services for substance abuse each year.
4. Each year there are 45,400 liquor law violations; 11,000 of these among adolescents. About 40,000 people are arrested each year for OWI.
5. Alcohol related driving fatalities **increased by 2%** in 2006-07 when nationwide alcohol related driving fatalities were reduced by 3.7%.
6. Which group causes more carnage on WI roadways: Repeat drunk drivers or those who have never been charged with an OWI? Those who have never been charged with drunk driving.
7. According to WI DOT, figures show between 1991 and 2002, **75% of fatal or serious-injury crashes** involving drivers who have consumed alcohol were caused by those never before arrested for operating while intoxicated.
8. National research shows that the biggest deterrent to drunk driving is the perceived likelihood of being caught. That's why sobriety checkpoints can have a huge impact.
9. Legalizing sobriety checkpoints **does not** mean mandatory road blocks. It simply allows local law enforcement the use of another tool to reduce drunk driving.
10. Only 12 states including Wisconsin prohibit sobriety checkpoints; the U.S. Supreme Court has found them to be constitutional. The CDC states that checkpoints reduce drunk driving deaths and fatalities by over 20%.
11. Wisconsin is the only state in the country where the first drunk driving offense is not a criminal offense; it is only a civil citation.
12. Criminalizing first offense **does not** mean making it a felony; it simply means making it a misdemeanor.

Affinity Health System
Aurora Health Care
Beloit Memorial Hospital
BRAVO is Building Responsible
Alcohol Values and Options
Children's Hospital and Health System
Focus on Community, Racine
Froedtert & Community Health
Gundersen Lutheran
Marathon County Health Department
Marshfield Clinic
Medical College of Wisconsin
Meriter Health Services
Milwaukee Deputy Sheriffs Association
Ministry Health Care
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
National Association of Alcoholism &
Drug Abuse Counselors
Reedsburg Area Medical Center
Resource Center on Impaired Driving
Rogers Behavioral Health System
Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative
St. Joseph's Community
Health Services, Hillsboro
Unity Health Insurance
UW Health
WI Alcohol & Drug Treatment
Providers Association
WI Association of Local Health
Departments and Boards
WI Association on Alcohol
& Other Drug Abuse
WI Association of Alcoholism & Drug
Abuse Counselors
WI Chapter of the American
College of Emergency Physicians
WI County Police Association
WI District Attorneys Association
WI Hospital Association
WI Medical Society
WI Public Health Association
WI Public Health Council
WI Sheriffs & Deputy
Sheriffs Association
WI State Laboratory of Hygiene
WPS Health Insurance