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Remarks of Glynn Birch  
MADD National President  
National Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving Launch  
November 20, 2006—Washington, DC

Thank you, Chuck. Yes, you heard Chuck right.

MADD is here today to announce the launch of the Campaign to **Eliminate** Drunk Driving.

Now I know the idea of **eliminating** a primary public health threat that has plagued the United States for a hundred years seems like an audacious idea. And if you said it was impossible, you would have been right 10 years ago. But, today, eliminating drunk driving is not a fantasy. It's a real probability. I would even suggest it's a national obligation.

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Eighteen years ago ...

<TELL STORY; 1 minute>

Unfortunately, I am not alone in my grief. Laura Dean Mooney, my colleague on the MADD Board of Directors, can tell you what this Campaign means to her after a drunk driver traveling on the wrong side of the road killed her husband Michael Dean 15 years ago tomorrow, leaving her to raise their eight-month-old daughter alone.

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This disease continues to plague our society and claim thousands of victims each year. But it doesn't have to. We now have at our fingertips the ability to create an antidote. It's our responsibility to push that process forward. MADD's Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving does just that by focusing on four key elements: intensive high-visibility law enforcement, full implementation of current alcohol ignition interlock technologies, exploration of new vehicle-based technology, and mobilization of grassroots support.

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*The first element is unprecedented support for intensive high-visibility law enforcement*

We know that highly visible enforcement crackdowns, including checkpoints and saturation patrols, are proven to get drunk drivers off the road.

Subsequently, MADD supports drunk driving crackdowns at key times such as Labor Day and the December holidays, as well as sustained enforcement efforts throughout the year.

Americans agree with our stance; 87 percent say they support the use of sobriety checkpoints.

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Currently, there are 10 states that do not allow sobriety checkpoints, despite their effectiveness. As part of a comprehensive enforcement strategy, MADD is committed to changing that.

*The second element of the campaign is full implementation of current alcohol ignition interlock technologies for all convicted drunk drivers.*

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The main reason people continue to drive drunk today is because they *can* and because we let them. MADD believes, and 65 percent of Americans agree, that first time offenders need and deserve an alcohol ignition interlock. Although interlocks are proven to be up to 90 percent effective while on the vehicle, it is estimated that only one out of eight convicted drunk drivers each year currently get the device. MADD is committed to increasing that number and that means we have to work with state legislatures, judges prosecutors and state drivers license officials to stop the revolving legal door.

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*The third element of the Campaign is exploration of new vehicle-based technology to stop drunk driving.*

MADD recently convened an International Technology Symposium, which formally recognized the need to create a Blue Ribbon Panel to assess the feasibility of a range of technologies that would prevent drunk driving.

If we can't stop drunks from driving, we'll stop vehicles from letting drunks drive. That's how we'll ultimately eliminate drunk driving all together.

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And the public is behind us: by a 4 to 1 margin, Americans support advances in smart vehicle technology to prevent drunk driving. We will hear more on this initiative momentarily from Sue Ferguson.

*Finally, we must mobilize the power of grassroots activism.* MADD, together with its more than 400 affiliates both here and abroad, is uniting drunk driving victims, families, community leaders, and policymakers to fight to **eliminate** drunk driving once and for all.

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Standing next to us today are representatives from the Department of Transportation, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the Governors Highway Safety Association, the Century Council, DISCUS, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Just last week, I met with a high ranking official from Japan's legislature. We have **all** agreed that it is time—it is time to eliminate drunk driving.

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Throughout the country, MADD is building broad-based support in order to push for comprehensive state-level policies that will ensure that drunk driving is finally abolished in this country. In the days and months ahead we will be expanding the reach of the Campaign because success will not be possible unless we all join together. So we welcome new partners to the table.

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Listen, I know the sheer audacity of this campaign could attract skeptics. In the 1940s writer Arthur C Clarke forecasted that a man would reach the moon by the year 2000. Experts dismissed the idea as rubbish. Nineteen years later on July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, taking one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind in the process.

Completely eliminating drunk driving represents yet another giant leap for mankind.

Thank you.

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I would now like to introduce our first partner in this historic effort.

Mary E. Peters was nominated by President Bush on September 5, 2006, and confirmed by the U.S.

Senate as the 15th Secretary of Transportation on September 30, 2006, after spending more than two decades crafting solutions to our nation's toughest transportation challenges.

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She is responsible for maintaining a safe, reliable and efficient transportation system, while leading an agency with almost 60,000 employees and a \$61.6 billion budget that oversees air, maritime and surface transportation missions.

In 2001, the President asked Peters to lead the Federal Highway Administration. As FHWA Administrator from 2001 to 2005, she placed special emphasis on finding new ways to invest in road and bridge construction, including innovative public-private partnerships that help build roads faster and at less expense.

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From 1985 to 2001, she served in the Arizona Department of Transportation. During her tenure, Mary Peters worked her way up through the ranks as a contract administrator, deputy director for administration, and deputy director. In 1998, then-Governor Jane Hull appointed her director of the agency. While in office, she was recognized as the *Most Influential Person in Arizona Transportation* by the *Arizona Business Journal*.

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MADD is honored to have Secretary Peters' and the Department of Transportation's support in our effort to eliminate drunk driving, and it is my pleasure to introduce her to you now.