



Rhode Island Not Doing Enough To Stop Hard Core Drunk Drivers, Says Providence Lawyer

Attorney Mark Gemma calls for renewed efforts to stop the most dangerous impaired motorists.

Providence, RI ([PRWEB](#)) December 26, 2008 -- Rhode Island continues to lag in its efforts to curb the most dangerous drunk drivers, putting residents at an increased risk of injury and death, says a Providence personal injury attorney.

"Rhode Island deserves better," said Mark Gemma, a principal at [Gemma Law Associates, Inc.](#), of Providence, R.I. The firm has represented drunk driving victims for more than four decades. "Innocent people are killed or permanently injured because our laws don't do enough to get drunk drivers off the road," Gemma said.

Gemma made his remarks in reaction to a new report by the National Transportation Safety Board, which found Rhode Island was trailing many other states in stopping "hard core" drunk drivers.

Hard core drunk drivers are those who are caught with blood alcohol levels of 0.15 percent or higher -- nearly twice the legal limit in many states -- as well as repeat offenders who have been arrested for impaired driving within the previous 10 years. A hard core drunk driver will make an average of 88 impaired trips before being arrested, according to federal officials.

At a November news conference timed to coincide with the beginning of the holiday travel season, NTSB Acting Chairman Mark V. Rosenker said more than half of the nation's approximately 17,000 alcohol-related traffic deaths in 2007 involved hard core drunk drivers.

The NTSB has recommended 11 measures to get drunk drivers off the road, including conducting regular sobriety checkpoints, lowering the legal drunk driving limit for a second offense and limiting plea bargaining in DWI cases.

No state has adopted all 11 recommendations to deter drunk drivers, but five states -- California, New Hampshire, Ohio, Utah and Virginia -- have adopted enough of the steps to win the board's endorsement. But Rhode Island is one of three states that have implemented just two of those 11 recommendations.

Drunk driving by Rhode Island motorists remains a widespread problem. A 2008 study by the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration found that 20 percent of Rhode Island adult drivers -- or one of every five motorists aged 18 or older -- had driven in the past year while under the influence of alcohol.

Gemma pointed to a 2007 federal traffic safety data that showed the daily death toll from drunk driving crashes during the Christmas and New Year's holiday periods is significantly higher than for the rest of the year.

"As we enter the holiday travel season, it's more important than ever that the state beefs up its efforts to put an end to these deadly drunk drivers," Gemma said.

About Gemma Law Associates, Inc.



Gemma Law Associates, Inc. is a highly regarded Providence, Rhode Island law firm that concentrates in personal injury law. The attorneys at Gemma Law Associates, Inc. have filed many claims on behalf of drunk driving victims and have a thorough understanding of Rhode Island's Liquor Liability Act. If you've suffered a serious personal injury due to a drunk driving accident, call Gemma Law Associates, Inc. at 401-467-2300 or contact the firm through its Web site at <http://www.gemmalaw.com/> for a free case evaluation.

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