



Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists

Woodfield Grove, Suite 131
Phone (847) 240-0027
Fax (847) 240-0028

870 East Higgins Road

Schaumburg, IL 60173
Toll free (888) 240-0027
www.aaim1.org

Recreational Marijuana in Illinois and Public Safety Economic Development and Cannabis Regulations and Taxation Act (SB316/HB2353)

The Alliance Against Intoxicated Motorists (AAIM) is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1982 by families who lost loved ones because of impaired driving crashes. As Illinois' first citizen action group dedicated to the fight against impaired driving, AAIM is extremely concerned about the possible traffic safety ramifications of legalizing recreational marijuana.

Cannabis is the most prevalent illicit drug consumed by impaired drivers. This fact is even more threatening when considering the risk of involvement in a motor vehicle crash doubles after smoking cannabis. Statistics from Washington State demonstrate the frequent use of marijuana by drivers involved in fatal crashes: 85% of these drivers tested positive for active THC. In Colorado, the number of drivers testing positive for marijuana jumped 145% from 2013 to 2016.

The number of drivers testing positive for marijuana has grown too quickly to ignore. The statistics highlight the potential danger on our highways when marijuana consumption and driving occur.

AAIM advocates continually work with families who have lost loved ones in marijuana-impaired driving crashes.

Drivers who have consumed cannabis attempt to compensate for their impairment by driving more slowly; however, physical motor control deteriorates with increasing task complexity. These drivers have impaired cognitive function and cause their vehicle to weave more in its lane of traffic. Critical tracking tests, reaction times, and divided attention tasks all demonstrate cannabis-induced impairment. Combining cannabis with alcohol only exacerbates this behavior.

Additionally, a further study regarding the effects of marijuana consumption is needed. The ability of drivers to perform complex divided attention tasks should be researched before these individuals are allowed to operate motor vehicles on our highways. Furthermore, the abilities of both chronic and occasional users to safely operate a motor vehicle and perform complex tasks should be evaluated.

The issue of traffic safety is one that affects every citizen of Illinois. Its importance should not be overlooked. The possible impact of the legalization of recreational marijuana upon traffic safety should be studied and evaluated before any action is taken. The safety of our highways and those persons who travel upon them is of the utmost importance.

AAIM's suggestions to reduce drug-impaired driving:

1. Support the development of drug-impaired driving legislation – with possible mandatory provisions.
2. Institute programs that promote and enhance officer training and use of drug recognition techniques.
3. Institute programs for judges and prosecutors in techniques of drug recognition.
4. Provide funding for advanced technology that enables officers to test for alcohol and other controlled substances in the field.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rita Kreslin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rita Kreslin

AAIM Executive Director