

Reducing alcohol-related driving deaths in state goal of legislation

The House of Representatives has passed a package of bills that proponents hope will curb the incidence of driving under the influence of intoxicants.

HB 2900 and HB 2901 were requested by Bruce and Anne Pratt and Janet Lovelace in an attempt to increase accountability from Oregonians who drive while impaired by intoxicants. Both bills were sponsored by Rep. Randy Miller (R-West Linn) and co-sponsored by a number of representatives and senators from both parties, including Rep. Gordon Anderson (R-Grants Pass), who carried HB 2901 on the House floor.

"Most of the legislation we deal with in the House concerns what seems like faceless num-

bers and regulations," Anderson said. "The bills we passed have life-and-death consequences, and victims with names and stories. I'm glad we could do what we can to discourage this dangerous behavior."

House Bill 2900 will establish the crime of refusing to take a breath test, punishing offenders with a fine of \$500 to \$1,000.

House Bill 2901 adds a statement to the state driver's license application that applicants would be required to sign that states: "I acknowledge that driving under the influence of intoxicants can result in serious injury or death. I agree not to drive under the influence of intoxicants."

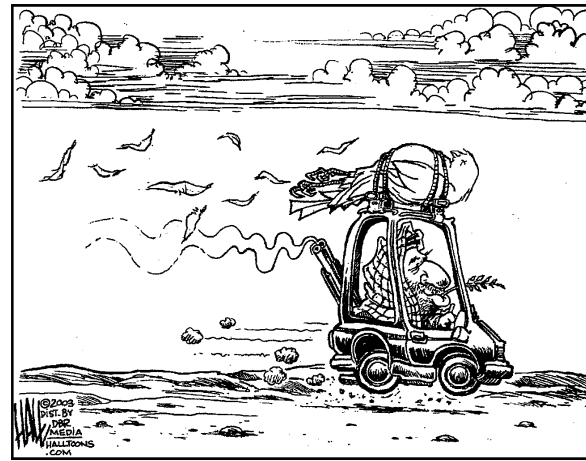
The signed form would be kept on file by

Driver & Motor Vehicle Services (DMV), and could potentially aid in prosecutions for DUI, as it would prove that the defendant knew that his or her behavior could cause injury or death.

"I have heartfelt hope that today we will be one step closer to making our roadways safe from intoxicated drivers. It is my wish that no other family suffer the needless, wasteful, devastating loss that we have," said Springfield resident Anne Pratt after the bill passed.

Pratt lost her son, Brian Hood, 23, to a drunken driver in 1998.

"Hopefully, through the passage of bills such as HB 2900 and HB 2901, we can put a stop to this senseless loss of life," Anderson said.



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- Bruce Van Horn-

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