

JAN 23 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO USE OF INTOXICANTS WHILE OPERATING A VEHICLE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Section 291E-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended as follows:

3 1. By amending the definition of "measurable amount of
4 alcohol" to read:

5 "Measurable amount of alcohol" means a test result equal
6 to or greater than .02 but less than [~~.08~~] .05 grams of alcohol
7 per one hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of blood or
8 equal to or greater than .02 but less than [~~.08~~] .05 grams of
9 alcohol per two hundred ten liters of breath."

10 2. By amending the definition of "under the influence" to
11 read:

12 "Under the influence" means that a person:

13 (1) Is under the influence of alcohol in an amount
14 sufficient to impair the person's normal mental
15 faculties or ability to care for the person and guard
16 against casualty;

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1 (2) Is under the influence of any drug that impairs the
2 person's ability to operate the vehicle in a careful
3 and prudent manner;

4 (3) Has [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per two hundred
5 ten liters of the person's breath; or

6 (4) Has [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per one hundred
7 milliliters or cubic centimeters of the person's
8 blood."

9 SECTION 2. Section 291E-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by amending subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

11 "(a) In any criminal prosecution for a violation of
12 section 291E-61 or 291E-61.5 or in any proceeding under part
13 III:

14 (1) [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per one hundred
15 milliliters or cubic centimeters of the person's
16 blood;

17 (2) [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per two hundred ten
18 liters of the person's breath; or

19 (3) The presence of one or more drugs in an amount
20 sufficient to impair the person's ability to operate a
21 vehicle in a careful and prudent manner,

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1 within three hours after the time of the alleged violation as
2 shown by chemical analysis or other approved analytical
3 techniques of the person's blood, breath, or urine shall be
4 competent evidence that the person was under the influence of an
5 intoxicant at the time of the alleged violation.

6 (b) In any criminal prosecution for a violation of section
7 291E-61 or 291E-61.5, the amount of alcohol found in the
8 defendant's blood or breath within three hours after the time of
9 the alleged violation as shown by chemical analysis or other
10 approved analytical techniques of the defendant's blood or
11 breath shall be competent evidence concerning whether the
12 defendant was under the influence of an intoxicant at the time
13 of the alleged violation and shall give rise to the following
14 presumptions:

15 (1) If there were [~~.05~~] .02 or less grams of alcohol per
16 one hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of
17 defendant's blood or [~~.05~~] .02 or less grams of
18 alcohol per two hundred ten liters of defendant's
19 breath, it shall be presumed that the defendant was
20 not under the influence of alcohol at the time of the
21 alleged violation; and

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1 (2) If there were in excess of [~~.05~~] .02 grams of alcohol
2 per one hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of
3 defendant's blood or [~~.05~~] .02 grams of alcohol per
4 two hundred ten liters of defendant's breath, but less
5 than [~~.08~~] .05 grams of alcohol per one hundred
6 milliliters or cubic centimeters of defendant's blood
7 or [~~.08~~] .05 grams of alcohol per two hundred ten
8 liters of defendant's breath, that fact may be
9 considered with other competent evidence in
10 determining whether the defendant was under the
11 influence of alcohol at the time of the alleged
12 violation, but shall not of itself give rise to any
13 presumption."

14 SECTION 3. Section 291E-35, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

16 "(a) In cases involving an alcohol related offense, if a
17 test conducted in accordance with part II and section 321-161 and
18 the rules adopted thereunder shows that a respondent had an
19 alcohol concentration less than [~~.087~~] .05, the director or the
20 arresting law enforcement agency immediately shall return the
21 respondent's license along with a certified statement that

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1 administrative revocation proceedings have been terminated with
2 prejudice."

3 SECTION 4. Section 291E-36, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

5 "(a) Whenever a respondent has been arrested for a
6 violation of section 291E-61 or 291E-61.5 and submits to a test
7 that establishes: the respondent's alcohol concentration was
8 [~~.08~~] .05 or more; the presence, in the respondent's blood or
9 urine, of any drug that is capable of impairing the respondent's
10 ability to operate a vehicle in a careful and prudent manner; or
11 whenever a respondent has been involved in a collision resulting
12 in injury or death and a blood or urine test performed pursuant
13 to section 291E-21 establishes that the respondent's alcohol
14 concentration was [~~.08~~] .05 or more or establishes the presence
15 in the respondent's blood or urine of any drug that is capable
16 of impairing the respondent's ability to operate a vehicle in a
17 careful and prudent manner, the following shall be forwarded
18 immediately to the director:

19 (1) A copy of the arrest report or the report of the law
20 enforcement officer who issued the notice of
21 administrative revocation to the person involved in a
22 collision resulting in injury or death and the sworn

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1 statement of the arresting law enforcement officer or
2 the officer who issued the notice of administrative
3 revocation, stating facts that establish that:

4 (A) There was reasonable suspicion to stop the
5 vehicle, the vehicle was stopped at an intoxicant
6 control roadblock established and operated in
7 compliance with sections 291E-19 and 291E-20, or
8 the respondent was tested pursuant to section
9 291E-21;

10 (B) There was probable cause to believe that the
11 respondent had been operating the vehicle while
12 under the influence of an intoxicant; and

13 (C) The respondent agreed to be tested or the person
14 was tested pursuant to section 291E-21;

15 (2) In a case involving an alcohol related offense, the
16 sworn statement of the person responsible for
17 maintenance of the testing equipment, stating facts
18 that establish that, pursuant to section 321-161 and
19 rules adopted thereunder:

20 (A) The equipment used to conduct the test was
21 approved for use as an alcohol testing device in
22 this State;

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- 1 (B) The person had been trained and at the time the
2 test was conducted was certified and capable of
3 maintaining the testing equipment; and
- 4 (C) The testing equipment used had been properly
5 maintained and was in good working condition when
6 the test was conducted;
- 7 (3) In a case involving an alcohol related offense, the
8 sworn statement of the person who conducted the test,
9 stating facts that establish that, pursuant to section
10 321-161 and rules adopted thereunder:
- 11 (A) The person was trained and at the time the test
12 was conducted was certified and capable of
13 operating the testing equipment;
- 14 (B) The person followed the procedures established
15 for conducting the test;
- 16 (C) The equipment used to conduct the test functioned
17 in accordance with operating procedures and
18 indicated that the respondent's alcohol
19 concentration was at, or above, the prohibited
20 level; and
- 21 (D) The person whose breath or blood was tested is
22 the respondent;

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1 (4) In a case involving a drug related offense, the sworn
2 statement of the person responsible for maintenance of
3 the testing equipment, stating facts that establish
4 that, pursuant to section 321-161 and rules adopted
5 thereunder:

6 (A) The equipment used to conduct the test was
7 approved for use in drug testing;

8 (B) The person conducting the test had been trained
9 and, at the time of the test, was certified and
10 capable of maintaining the testing equipment; and

11 (C) The testing equipment used had been properly
12 maintained and was in good working condition when
13 the test was conducted;

14 (5) In a case involving a drug related offense, the sworn
15 statement of the person who conducted the test,
16 stating facts that establish that, pursuant to section
17 321-161 and rules adopted thereunder:

18 (A) At the time the test was conducted, the person
19 was trained and capable of operating the testing
20 equipment;

21 (B) The person followed the procedures established
22 for conducting the test;

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1 (C) The equipment used to conduct the test functioned
2 in accordance with operating procedures and
3 indicated the presence of one or more drugs or
4 their metabolites in the respondent's blood or
5 urine; and

6 (D) The person whose blood or urine was tested is the
7 respondent;

8 (6) A copy of the notice of administrative revocation
9 issued by the law enforcement officer to the
10 respondent;

11 (7) Any license taken into possession by the law
12 enforcement officer; and

13 (8) A listing of any prior alcohol or drug enforcement
14 contacts involving the respondent."

15 SECTION 5. Section 291E-61, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

17 "(a) A person commits the offense of operating a vehicle
18 under the influence of an intoxicant if the person operates or
19 assumes actual physical control of a vehicle:

20 (1) While under the influence of alcohol in an amount
21 sufficient to impair the person's normal mental

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1 faculties or ability to care for the person and guard
2 against casualty;

3 (2) While under the influence of any drug that impairs the
4 person's ability to operate the vehicle in a careful
5 and prudent manner;

6 (3) With [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per two
7 hundred ten liters of breath; or

8 (4) With [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per one
9 hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of blood."

10 SECTION 6. Section 291E-61.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
11 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

12 "(a) A person commits the offense of habitually operating
13 a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant if:

14 (1) The person is a habitual operator of a vehicle while
15 under the influence of an intoxicant; and

16 (2) The person operates or assumes actual physical control
17 of a vehicle:

18 (A) While under the influence of alcohol in an amount
19 sufficient to impair the person's normal mental
20 faculties or ability to care for the person and
21 guard against casualty;

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- 1 (B) While under the influence of any drug that
- 2 impairs the person's ability to operate the
- 3 vehicle in a careful and prudent manner;
- 4 (C) With [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per two
- 5 hundred ten liters of breath; or
- 6 (D) With [~~.08~~] .05 or more grams of alcohol per one
- 7 hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of
- 8 blood."

9 SECTION 7. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
10 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
11 begun before its effective date.

12 SECTION 8. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
13 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 9. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

15

16

INTRODUCED BY: 

17

BY REQUEST

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Report Title:

Drug and Alcohol Toxicology Testing; Blood Alcohol Content;
Lower Threshold

Description:

Lowers the blood alcohol content threshold for driving while under the influence of alcohol from .08 to .05 or more grams of alcohol to reduce impaired driving and fatal crashes.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

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JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Office of the Governor.

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO USE OF INTOXICANTS WHILE OPERATING A VEHICLE.

PURPOSE: To lower the blood alcohol content threshold for driving while under the influence of alcohol from 0.08 to 0.05 or more grams of alcohol per one hundred milliliters or cubic centimeters of blood or per two hundred ten liters of breath to reduce impaired driving and fatal crashes.

MEANS: Amend sections 291E-1, 291E-3(a) and (b), 291E-35(a), 291E-36(a), 291E-61(a), and 291E-61.5(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS).

JUSTIFICATION: Impaired driving continues to be a problem in Hawaii and is a leading cause of traffic fatalities. The National Transportation Safety Board recommends that all states lower their limits for alcohol impaired driving to 0.05 blood alcohol content to prevent and reduce traffic fatalities and crashes. Lowering the threshold for impaired driving brings the State closer to making roads safer for all users.

Impact on the public: Likely reduction in alcohol-related traffic incidents by encouraging more responsible drinking habits and deterring impaired driving. This change may initially lead to more driving under the influence arrests and legal consequences for individuals who misjudge the lowered threshold, but over time, the lower blood alcohol content decreases driving risks and promotes safer roads.

Impact on the department and other agencies: The Department of Health will need to implement public health campaigns that may require coordination with the Department of the Attorney General, Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Transportation,

the Judiciary, and county law enforcement agencies.

The Department of Health may also see an increase in alcohol abuse and misuse services.

GENERAL FUND: None.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: None.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: Department of Health; Department of Law Enforcement; Department of the Attorney General; Judiciary; County Law Enforcement Agencies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.