



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 26, 2011

Contact: Shannon L. Kingery
402.471.2067
Shannon.kingery@nebraska.gov

Note: A sound bite on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

AG Bruning Applauds Signing of LB 667

LINCOLN – Attorney General Jon Bruning today applauded the signing of LB 667 passed by the Nebraska Legislature on May 24, 2011. LB 667 was designed to stiffen penalties for those who drive under the influence (DUI) of alcohol in Nebraska.

At a private signing ceremony today, AG Bruning joined Governor Dave Heineman, Nebraska Legislature Speaker Mike Flood and State Senator Norman Wallman to commemorate the legislation's passage.

“Increasing penalties for drunk driving reinforces the seriousness of keeping our roadways safe for all Nebraskans,” said Governor Heineman. “This legislation is critical to that effort.”

Also attending the signing were family members of Jessica Lutton Bedient who was killed in Omaha by a second-offense drunk driver last October.

“This is a bittersweet day for our family,” said Jessica’s father, David Lutton. “If this law had been in place one year ago, maybe Jess would still be with us.”

LB 667 was introduced this session by Speaker Mike Flood.

“I continue to believe that we can do a better job to prevent drunk driving accidents and fatalities in the state of Nebraska,” said Speaker Flood. “I’m proud of this legislation.”

State Senator Norman Wallman made LB 667 a priority bill for 2011.

“This is such an important piece of legislation,” said Sen. Wallman. “We believe it will save lives.”

Provisions of LB 667 allow motor-vehicle homicides committed while under the influence of drugs or alcohol to be charged as separate and distinct offenses.

“This legislation strengthens our DUI laws and helps ensure drunks who get behind the wheel and kill will be held accountable for their crimes,” said Bruning. “Cracking-down on drunk drivers is essential to the safety of Nebraskans.”

Other key provisions:

- Make it unlawful to drive under the influence with a passenger under 16-years-of-age. A violation of this section is a Class I misdemeanor and shall be treated as a separate and distinct offense.
- Enhance the punishment to a Class IIIA felony for knowingly and intentionally procuring to a minor and bodily injury or death results or is proximately caused by the minor's consumption or impaired condition. Includes a mandatory minimum of thirty days imprisonment.
- Increase license revocation from the current 90 days to 180 days for failing chemical Blood-alcohol content test.
- Bring penalties for boating while under the influence of drugs or alcohol into conformance with motor-vehicle drunk-driving statutes.

###