

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding HB 3233. I feel strongly about this bill for very personal reasons and hope you'll understand why it must not be passed.

My name is Kristi Finney-Dunn. My 28 year old son Dustin was killed in Portland on August 12, 2011, by a drunk driver. After striking Dustin, he then hit a teenager, leaving him with minor injuries, and continued on driving "as if nothing happened" (according to witnesses). Fortunately, he was picked up quickly.

After my son's preventable death, I researched traffic fatalities and was horrified by the numbers of people dying and the reasons why and how they are being killed. Intoxicated drivers kill one third of the people killed on our roads, more than 10,000 sons, daughters, wives, husbands, mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, friends, neighbors, and co-workers per year.

I speak today not as just a bereaved mother who hopes and prays that a tragedy like mine doesn't happen to someone else. I speak as the sister of a man who got a DUI on the way to an event honoring Dustin's memory on the first anniversary of my son's death. Yes, my brother was driving drunk to an event to remember his own nephew who was killed by a drunk driver. This was Dustin's uncle's 13th DUI. He'd already been jailed. He'd already had his license revoked. He'd already had an ignition interlock device. Most importantly, he'd already lost his nephew and even that didn't prevent him from driving drunk again.

I went to court with another mother whose son was hit –but fortunately not killed- by a repeat drunk driver. I have another friend whose husband was killed by a repeat drunk driver; she has now lost not just her best friend but also her livelihood. My co-worker's husband was struck by a 4 time repeat offender; Carl barely survived and is now disabled for life. He just had his 23rd surgery to repair damage done after his motorcycle handlebars were driven into his abdomen.

I speak at Victim Impact Panels to share Dustin's story. At those panels, I've met the very first young man on the scene after Dustin died, the morgue attendant who loaded Dustin's body into the medical examiner's van, numerous of Dustin's friends and those of the other young man injured in the same collision, and even the daughter of a man who killed someone while driving drunk. Their knowledge of the dangers of drunk driving didn't stop these people from driving drunk themselves.

I believe repeat offenders have had their opportunity to learn, to make changes, to get help if they need it. It seems some people are incapable of making the right choice, the moral choice, the life-saving choice, of not getting behind the wheel drunk. These people don't consider the other people on the road and those peoples' families. These repeat drunk drivers don't even consider their own families, who would be devastated if this driver killed himself or herself or went to prison for killing someone else.

I firmly believe that these drivers need more accountability, not less. They need less wiggle room, fewer opportunities to convince themselves that their rights trump the rights of other drivers for safe roads. Please do not pass HB 3233. It is not a good choice for anyone, not even the drunk driver. Thank you.

Kristi Finney-Dunn