

# .05 BAC Safety Briefing Facts

## Why does the NTSB support .05 BAC laws?

- ✓ Decades of research show that .05 BAC laws can save lives on the roads. (Albalade 2008; Thomas et al., 2022)
- ✓ A .05 BAC law has a broad deterrent effect because it helps prevent drinking drivers from getting behind the wheel in the first place. (Byrne et al., 2016)
- ✓ Alcohol, both alone and in combination with other drugs, continues to be the drug with the most detrimental impact on traffic safety. (NTSB 2022)

### Who supports a .05 BAC limit?

NTSB  
National Safety Council  
Advocates for Auto and Highway Safety  
Mothers Against Drunk Driving  
National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine  
The World Health Organization  
AB InBev

## Impairment effects by BAC (NHTSA)

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>.02<br/>BAC</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decline in visual functions</li> <li>• Decline in ability to perform two tasks at same time</li> </ul>                                                                                                  |
| <b>.05<br/>BAC</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced coordination</li> <li>• Reduced ability to track moving objects</li> <li>• Difficulty steering</li> <li>• Reduced response to emergency driving situations</li> </ul>                           |
| <b>.08<br/>BAC</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced ability to concentrate</li> <li>• Short-term memory loss</li> <li>• Difficulty controlling speed</li> <li>• Reduced information-processing capability</li> <li>• Impaired perception</li> </ul> |

Enacting .05 BAC laws in all states would result in an estimated 11% decline in fatal alcohol-related crashes and save at least 1,700 lives annually in the US. (Fell and Scherer 2017)

For drivers with BACs of .05–.079 g/dL, the risk of being in a single-vehicle fatal crash was at least 7 times higher than for drivers with no alcohol in their system. (Fell and Voas 2014)

## Effects of the 2018 Utah .05 BAC law (Thomas et al., 2022)

- ✓ A 19.8% reduction in the fatal crash rate between 2016 and 2019
- ✓ More than 1 in 5 drinkers changed behaviors, such as planning alternative transportation when drinking away from home
- ✓ No decrease in alcohol sales, alcohol consumption, or tourism revenue
- ✓ No marked increase in DUI arrests

### .05 BAC LAW AT-A-GLANCE

A majority of Americans support .05 BAC laws. (AAA FTS 2022)

### What .05 BAC law DOES:

Saves lives

Deters people at ALL BACs from driving

Separates drinking from driving

### What .05 BAC law DOES NOT do:

There is no evidence that it reduces drinking.

In fact, per capita alcohol consumption in several countries with a .05 BAC law is the same or higher than in the US, but deaths are lower.

It does not necessarily increase arrests.

People make the right choice not to get behind the wheel when they have been drinking (primary prevention).

## SCAN THE CODES TO:

### WATCH OUR .05 BAC VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLES

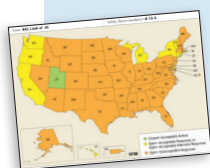
#### PART 1: Past, Present and Future



#### PART 2: Legislative Primer



### READ OUR REPORT ON States' Progress on Implementing Alcohol-Impaired Driving Recommendations



## What was the impact on safety of moving from .10 to .08?

A comprehensive 2017 independent research study shows that from 1982 to 2014, in 50 states and DC, **lowering the per se iBAC limit from .10 to .08 resulted in a 10.4% reduction in alcohol-related fatalities, with no change in alcohol consumption.** This means that lowering the BAC to .08 in the US has **saved 1,736 lives annually.** A total of 24,868 lives were saved between 1983 and 2014 due to lowering the BAC to .08. (Fell and Scherer 2017)

## What is the international experience with .05?

Approximately 100 countries have some type of .05 or lower BAC laws and, **while their average alcohol consumption is the same or higher than the US, their proportion of alcohol-related deaths are lower.**

| Metrics                                                                             |  US<br>.08 BAC |  Sweden<br>.02 BAC |  Netherlands<br>.05 BAC |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Alcohol-related crash deaths<sup>1</sup></b>                                     | <b>31%</b>                                                                                      | <b>19%</b>                                                                                            | <b>19%</b>                                                                                                 |
| <b>Average alcohol consumption<br/>(liters pure alcohol per capita)<sup>2</sup></b> | <b>9.2</b>                                                                                      | <b>9.2</b>                                                                                            | <b>9.9</b>                                                                                                 |

<sup>1</sup> *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*

<sup>2</sup> *World Health Statistics 2015*

Twenty years of international studies have shown that when a country lowers BAC limits from .08 to .05, **alcohol-related fatal and injury crashes decrease between 5% and 10%.** (Mann et al., 2001; Fell & Voas 2006)

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