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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 14, 2011, 9:30 a.m. CT

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## **Gov. Heineman Announces Tougher Drunk Driving Laws Starting in January**

### ***Ignition interlock is a new option for DUI offenders***

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman today discussed the new drunk driving laws that go into effect on Jan. 1, 2012. The tougher law should make Nebraskans think twice before driving under the influence.

“This law improves public safety by removing a drunk driver from the road as quickly as possible,” said Gov. Dave Heineman. “The DMV conducts 6,000 administrative hearings annually. This law will streamline the process for law enforcement, the DMV and the DUI offender. By using the ignition interlock device, offenders can continue to drive to work and go to school, but only if they are driving safe and sober.”

Part of the new law, LB 667, DUI offenders can either have an administrative license revocation hearing with the Department of Motor Vehicles or request the installation of an ignition interlock device in their vehicles. The ignition interlock device is an instrument installed in a vehicle’s dashboard to monitor breath alcohol concentration. The driver of the vehicle is required to blow into a sensor and provide a clean test reading under 0.03 breath alcohol concentrations. Any reading above that level will prevent the car to start.

People arrested for first and second offense DUIs will have incentives for applying for interlocks over an administrative license revocation hearing. By installing the device, offenders are able to continue to drive to work, school, probation hearings and other specified locations.

“The goal of the Nebraska’s new administrative license revocation program is to offer an obvious choice to DUI offenders – No Interlock, No Keys. It’s that simple,” said Beverly Neth, Director of the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles. “Through LB 667, we have found a

way to ensure public safety with effective monitoring of a DUI offender and to reduce the costs of the administrative program for law enforcement, the courts, and the DMV.”

In 2010, 53 people in Nebraska died in alcohol-related crashes and another 790 were injured. Research studies have shown that the use of ignition interlocks reduces repeat drunk driving offenses by an average of 64 percent. After a law that required ignition interlocks was enacted in New Mexico in 2002, preliminary results of a study showed that the devices reduced alcohol-related injury crashes by approximately 32 percent.

“This law will work to stop drivers from operating motor vehicles while impaired by allowing the state to more quickly intervene following an arrest for DUI,” said Sen. Mike Flood, speaker of the Nebraska Legislature and sponsor of LB 667.

DUI offenders arrested as of Jan. 1, 2012, may be eligible to apply for an ignition interlock permit and should contact the DMV at (402) 471-3985 to determine if they are eligible. Additional information about ignition interlocks can be found at [www.ClickDMV.ne.gov](http://www.ClickDMV.ne.gov).

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