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TITLE: A Time Series Evaluation of the General Deterrent Effects of California's 1982 DUI Legislative Reforms (Volume 2 of "Development of a DUI Recidivism Tracking System")

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate the effect of a series of 1982 DUI legislative reforms in deterring drunk driving, as measured by the impact on alcohol-related fatal or injury accident rates.

SUMMARY:

This project evaluated the effects of legislative reforms to California's DUI countermeasure system, which in part introduced the illegal per se standard, enhanced penalties, and mandated greater uniformity with regard to sentencing than had previously been applied. Intervention time series analysis was used to evaluate the deterrent effects of these laws on the general population of DUI offenders, as measured by effects in alcohol-related traffic accident rates, both statewide and in counties sharing similar demographic and enforcement patterns. A second group of analyses were performed to assess the significance of the formation of the emerging anti-drunk-driving sentiment largely popularized by the formation of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

Both implementation of the DUI statutes, and the publicity and societal dynamics surrounding the creation of MADD, were found to be associated with reductions in subsequent alcohol-related fatal and injury accident rates, with evidence of more pronounced effects among injury accidents. Significant intervention effects were found in each regional grouping with little variation between groups, indicating that, as grouped, differences in demographics and county enforcement policies did not mediate the significant general deterrent impact of the DUI legislative intervention.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

In 1990, California reduced the per se BAC threshold to .08 and enacted a preconviction administrative license suspension law.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

This study was Published in *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 26(1), 63-78 1994. For related California DMV studies, see Rogers, *The General Deterrent Impact of California's 0.08% Blood Alcohol Concentration Limit and Administrative Per Se License Suspension Laws*, Report #158, and *The Specific Deterrent Impact of California's 0.08% Blood Alcohol Concentration Limit and Administrative Per Se License Suspension Law*", Report #167. Recommendations for enactment of a 0.10% illegal per se BAC threshold were made in a 1975 legislative report pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 44-Harmer (Epperson, Harano & Peck, 1975).