



Free Press Viewpoint

Lower DUI limit counterproductive

The National Transportation Safety Board wants to lower the legal limit for a drunk driving conviction from the current .08 blood alcohol reading down to .05.

The difference could be dramatic for casual and social drinkers – from as many as four drinks in an hour down to just two or three for the average man, and one for many women – but the expected gains in cutting accidents would not be so great.

Nearly all states have cut their definition of drunk driving by nearly half over the last 33 years. In 1980, before the nation began a push to eliminate DUI – most states used a blood alcohol reading of .15 to define drunk driving. Today, the figure is down to .08 in nearly every state.

The changes we've made since then have cut deaths caused by drunk drivers in half over 30 years. The coming change, down to .05, is expected to reduce highway deaths by as many as 500 a year, but that's a drop of only 5 percent.

Many are asking, is that worth the price? Will an even-tighter standard really reduce fatalities, or is this movement being driven by the anti-alcohol crazies who seem to have taken over the drunk-driving crusade?

It's become difficult to speak out against any tightening of drunk-driving laws in the U.S., because anyone who does so is branded as being against safe roads and for drunk driving. It's a position most politicians can't afford to be in.

But do we want to prevent social drinkers who aren't really the problem from driving, or do we want to eliminate drunk-driving deaths?

Increasingly, the evidence shows that some things work and some don't. One of the biggest problems is dealing with repeat offenders, people who keep drinking and driving. Often, when caught, they're driving without a license already. It's common for police to stop people "driving under suspension," even though penalties can be stiff.

It's nearly impossible to live in America today, hold a job – and not drive. We set people up so they are punished for driving drunk, but they find they need to drive to hold a job. Or drive to the bar.

These are the people causing the problem. They are hard to deal with. They are problem drinkers because they are in the grip of terrible disease and just don't care. They'd rather drink.

Yet the "drunk driving" establishment seems to be more interested in punishing people just for drinking.

That's why the founder of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Candy Lightner, quit the group. She said the people in charge are "neo-prohibitionist," pursuing an anti-alcohol agenda.

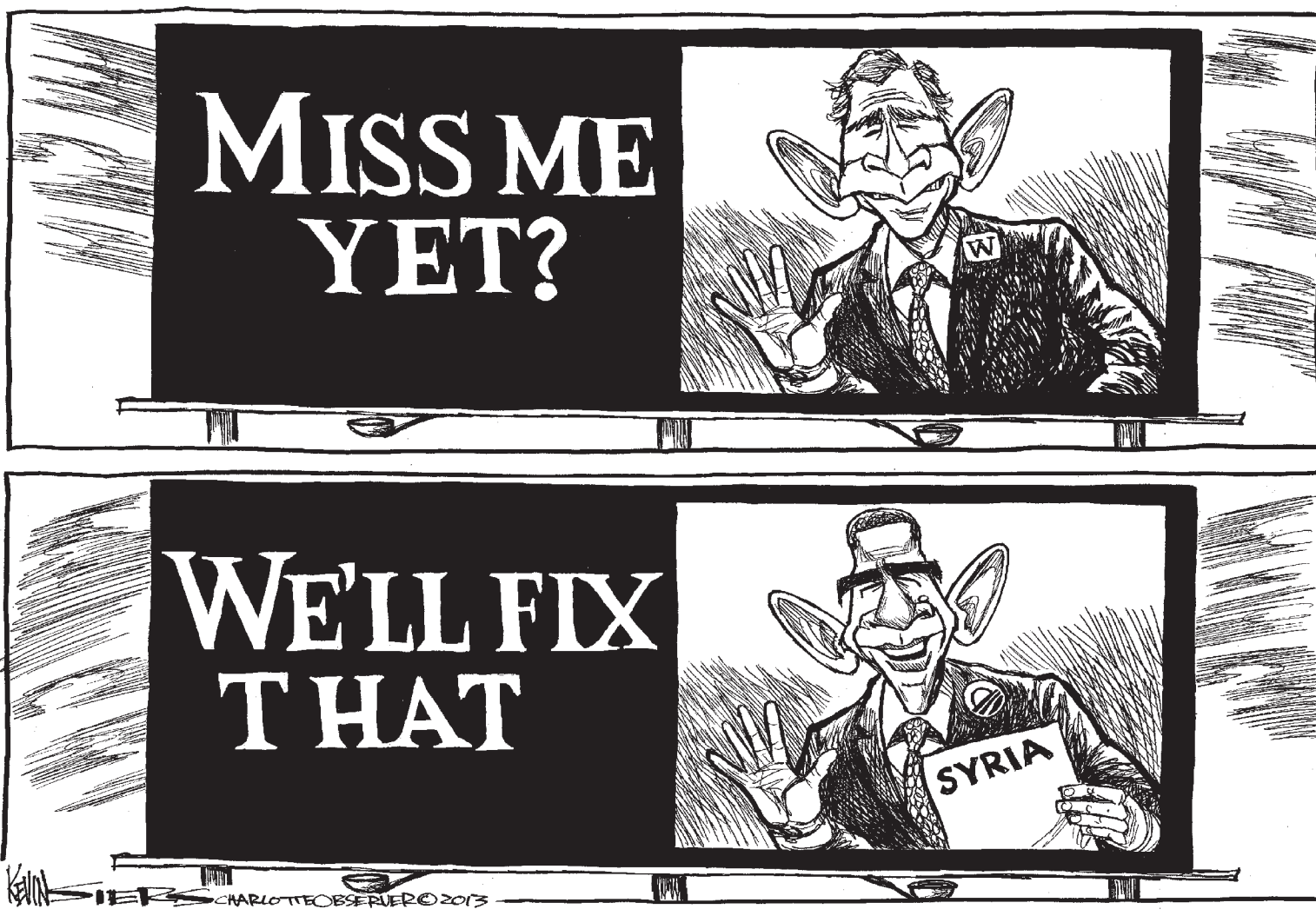
"I didn't start MADD to deal with alcohol," she said recently. "I started MADD to deal with the issue of drunk driving."

Since most drivers involved in drunk-driving deaths are repeat offenders with a blood reading of .20 or higher, it would make sense to go after them with tougher penalties, ignition interlocks and other tactics, not the social drinker.

But in a world where we've attempted to reinstate prohibition for college-age kids – a foolish law that's problematical and widely ignored – that's not what the anti-drinkers want.

Will the new push for a .05 standard bring about stiffer drunk-driving laws? Possibly. But will it solve the problem? Not likely. It'll just make life more difficult for the rest of us.

But dealing with problem drinkers is no easy thing. We can expect Congress and the states to take the easy course instead of one that might help solve the problem. – *Steve Haynes*



Turkish women both modest, stylish

"Don't forget to take long sleeves," my daughter warned me. "Turkish women are very modest. In fact, you'll be surprised at how they manage to be modest and fashionable at the same time."

Daughter had visited this fascinating country several years previously. Things hadn't changed much. Most Turkish women dress from top to bottom, with only their faces and hands showing.

One of the most common fashion items among the more conservative women seems to be a long raincoat-like thing. It's not gorgeous, but these women know how to accessorize with scarves, vests and leggings.

When the Ottoman empire fell after World War I, women began to be pulled in many directions with Western equality and dress warring with tradition and Islamic morality.

Then starting in 1925, the founder of modern Turkey and first president, Mustafa Ataturk started to push for women to drop their tent-like dresses called a carsaf and even their head scarves. Secularism became part of the Turkish constitution.

According to the *Turkish Review*, a magazine on politics, culture and tradition, the caliphate was abolished in 1924 and in 1928, a constitutional provision declaring Islam as the state religion was repealed. In February 1937, the concept of secularism became part of the constitution.



Cynthia Haynes

- Open Season

For women in traditional dress, these new rules meant that they could be denied entrance to public buildings, including those of universities. Young women who believed in traditional modesty, in effect, were barred from higher education.

One of our guides said that a sister of his was denied access to college because she wore a traditional headscarf and could not attend the university.

According to the *Review*, "Employment in the public sector, that is, working for the government, the bureaucracy and civil service, as well as public schools, was not – and is still not – an option for headscarved women."

That said, more than half of the women we saw in the cities and almost all those in the countryside wore headscarves. While many of these were walking on the streets of Istanbul, shopping in the capital city of Ankara or working in the tomato fields in the farm areas between, many were also working in the offices of the newspapers and television station

we visited. There were women wearing headscarves working in the shops and restaurants. They were reporters, shopkeepers, maids and guides.

When two reporters spoke to us, one was covered, one was not. The host of the evening news wore nothing on her head, although many of those behind the scenes were in traditional dress.

As an American, it seems strange that Turkish women should be struggling for the religious freedom to wear their headscarves.

I have a hard time figuring out why anyone would want to wear a head covering whenever they left their home, but then Amish and Mennonite women here always wear their headgear, and no one thinks much about it.

In the end, as my daughter said, many Turkish women are both stylish and mostly covered. And they may put on a lot of clothes, but they don't skimp on the cosmetics. They primp in the ladies' room just like all the rest of us. They just don't have to worry about what their hair looks like.

Come to think of it, "no more bad-hair days" doesn't sound all that bad.

Cynthia Haynes, co-owner and chief financial officer of Nor'West Newspapers, writes this column weekly. Her pets include cats, toads and a praying mantis. Contact her at c.haynes@nwkansas.com

State Fair has evolved over a century

More than a century ago, a group of business leaders in Hutchinson formed the Reno County Agricultural Society and held a fair in a small wooden livery stable behind the town's only bank.

Forty years later in 1913, Kansas Governor George Hodges made Hutchinson the official location for the Kansas State Fair, which was described by *The Hutchinson News* as having an "auspicious opening" when thousands of Kansans gathered for "a record-breaking agricultural and horticultural exhibit showing."

The fair continued to grow over the next 100 years and became a true reflection of the times. Just as life in Kansas changed drastically during World War II, so did the fair. The 1942 Kansas State Fair had a "Scrap Day," where more than 32 tons of metal was collected to contribute to the war effort by offering free admission in exchange for donations. Booths even had war bonds and stamps available for purchase.

A century later, the "auspicious opening" description of the first official Kansas State Fair still rings true, as it remains Kansas' largest single event – attracting nearly 350,000 attendees annually. Kansas families enjoy endless entertainment, thrilling rides, exhibitor booths, and – of course – delicious food. A staple food-stop for me and my wife, Robba – who is a former Kansas State Fair board president – is Our Lady of Guadalupe's food station in Cottonwood Court where parishioners build camaraderie serving hungry folks tasty enchiladas, tacos and tamales.

While the fair continues to evolve – just as our state does – its roots remain in agriculture. As the economic backbone of so many of the Kansas towns where you and I were raised, agriculture is also our link to the past – a time when families were the axis around which all



U.S. Senator Jerry Moran

- Moran's Memo

things revolved. In today's fast-paced world, there are few industries where sons and daughters can still work side-by-side with moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas. The fair is a great time to celebrate that tradition.

One way the tradition is showcased at the fairgrounds is through Kansas youth organizations like 4-H and FFA. I always enjoy visiting with these young people who learn the meaning of hard work and responsibility through projects like raising and showing livestock, taking photographs, baking or learning carpentry through woodworking construction. But it's also hard not to recognize the parents and mentors who were there every step of the way. Through experiences in organizations like 4-H and FFA, our state and country's next generation of leaders are being equipped with the skills and values necessary to reach their full potential and become successful in life.

With the record-setting drought and the uncertainty surrounding the Farm Bill, it is vital that we make certain agriculture remains profitable so there is a next generation of farmers and ranchers in Kansas. As a senator from a farm state, I often find myself educating my colleagues in Washington about the critical importance of strong agriculture policy. With an increasingly urban Congress and the complexities of a global agricultural economy, this is often not an easy task. My conversations with Kansans during the fair remind me

that working to keep the family farm alive and providing consumers with safe and affordable food is worth every effort.

As the Kansas State Fair celebrates 100 years, we are blessed to have such a strong agriculture community. I hope you will join me in honoring that community by attending the fair which begins Friday and runs through Sunday, Sept. 15. I know you will enjoy the rides and the wonderful – and sometimes wacky – food, but be sure to check out the exhibit halls, livestock barns and countless educational opportunities. I also have a booth in the Pride of Kansas building where members of my staff will be available to answer questions, so come by for a visit. Thank you to the Kansas State Fair board members and staff who put in countless hours of planning to ensure the fair's success.

I hope to see you and your family at the fair, and am sure you'll leave with a greater appreciation for the agriculture families who work so hard to make certain Kansas remains the special place we love to call home.

Jerry Moran of Hays is the junior U.S. senator from Kansas. His committee appointments include Appropriations; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Veterans Affairs; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; and the Special Committee on Aging. To sign up for his weekly newsletter, go to moran.senate.gov.

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Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce Tinsley

