EBINDIV

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Mr. Joe Knollenberg
Congressman
30833 Northwestern Hwy.
Suite 100
Farmington Hills, MI 48334

Dear Mr. Knollenberg,

I am a 21-year-old Oakland University graduate, and I am about to begin my student teaching at Pine Lake Elementary School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. As a young educator, I feel it is important to voice my opinions and play a role in shaping a positive future for the next generation and today's society. Although Michigan's lawmakers have made progress toward creating a safe environment with the enforcement of regulations such as the Michigan Safety Belt Law, I feel that one vital area is still overlooked.

As a young adult, I often frequent bars on weekends to socialize with friends. I make the personal choice not to drink alcohol, thus, I often choose to be the "designated driver" at these social gatherings. Nonetheless, I am presented with the same unsettling situation each weekend when I go out. A sufficient amount of bar attendees leave to drive home while intoxicated. Despite the knowledge of drunk-driving dangers, many people still have the mentality that they are exempt from any peril. According to http://www.alcoholalert.com, which lists drunk driving statistics for all states, including Michigan, the amount of deaths in alcohol-related car crashes has decreased since 1982; however, fatalities still occur, and people continue to drive while under the influence of alcohol.

I am concerned that laws are not strict enough to keep people from driving drunk. I am aware that budget limits may prevent extensive enforcement methods; yet, I feel that drunk driving is an important issue that requires further attention. I have many ideas for laws that will increase the surveillance and ultimate prevention of drunk driving. For example, bars could require that drivers leave their driver's license or keys at the front of the bar when they enter. Then, when they return to collect their item prior to leaving, the driver could be required to take a Breathalyzer test. I understand that such processes

involve much more planning and consideration; however, I feel that this would be a good starting point.

Please consider my concerns regarding the issue of drunk driving. Today's generation of teenagers and young adults unfortunately feel that they can outsmart law officials. I know firsthand that high school and college-aged individuals have no difficulty attaining alcohol, as well as drugs, primarily marijuana; these people do not fear the consequences because they assume they will not be caught. I am disturbed by the fact that adolescents are turning to such dangerous habits and I feel that it is the responsibility of the government to enforce stricter laws and consequences to prevent the tragedies that could occur from such behavior.

I appreciate your time and encourage you to contact me if there is anything further that I can do to achieve these goals.

Sincerely,



Katie Lynn Fried