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## **American Beverage Licensees Executive Director John Bodnovich Statement on the NAS Report on Alcohol-Impaired Driving**

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**BETHESDA, MD** – *American Beverage Licensees* (ABL) Executive Director John Bodnovich issued the following statement regarding the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) study “Getting to Zero Alcohol-Impaired Driving Fatalities: A Comprehensive Approach to a Persistent Problem”.

“Independent beverage business owners, with strong ties to their local communities, have long been engaged in efforts to oppose and stop drunk driving. They view themselves as partners with policymakers, local law enforcement and other stakeholders committed to addressing impaired driving.

“Therefore, it is disappointing that much of today’s report takes a step back, instead of a step forward, in addressing the complexities involved with impaired driving. The report reflects a battery of recycled recommendations and, more disturbingly, represents a squandered opportunity to be inclusive and forward-looking when it comes to drugged and distracted driving.

“It also raises serious questions about what the \$2 million spent on the report could have funded to more directly address impaired driving.

“Perhaps most troubling is the study’s unserious suggestion to reject meaningful contributions of the alcohol industry – any groups that receive funding from the industry – when it comes to fighting impaired driving.

“To suggest that local bars, taverns and package stores have no role to play in this fight ignores those who are already on the front lines of preventing impaired driving and limits our societal efforts to address this problem.

“Along with groups focused on public safety who support the strong enforcement of the .08 BAC level, ABL opposes the study’s call to arbitrarily lower the BAC limit to .05. Doing so would effectively criminalize the activities of law-abiding, responsible social drinkers. It would also dilute current efforts to stop repeat offenders and those who drive with a BAC of nearly twice the legal limit, who represent the majority of drunk drivers.

“Despite the tone and recommendations in this report, beer, wine and spirits retailers will seek to build on the historic decline in alcohol-related traffic fatalities over the past three decades. Beverage licensees will continue to work within their communities and with public officials to support effective drunk driving policies while opposing those that undermine the important steps already taken in this fight.”

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*American Beverage Licensees* is the preeminent national trade association for beverage alcohol retailers. Direct retail beverage alcohol sales in the United States generate as many as 1.94 million well-paying jobs. ABL’s thousands of on-premise and off-premise licensee members are independent and often family-owned establishments. The beverage retailing industry pays over \$25.3 billion in federal taxes and \$18.36 billion in state and local taxes. To learn more about ABL, visit [www.ablusa.org](http://www.ablusa.org).