

## **Governor Walker signs the SafeRide Surcharge proposal into law**

As part of the 2015-16 state budget, Governor Walker recently signed the SafeRide Surcharge proposal into law. Under the new law every OWI conviction in the state will be assessed a \$50 SafeRide Surcharge to be used for alternative transportation programs like the TLW SafeRide Program. For the fiscal year 2015-16 the SafeRide Surcharge will generate an additional \$470,000 for SafeRide Programs and approximately \$940,000 each year after. The new law takes effect immediately.

The SafeRide Surcharge is a much needed boost of revenue to our SafeRide Program and will ensure its long term viability as well as providing the necessary revenue to continue to expand the program statewide. The current funding for our program had a deficit of \$350,000 in 2014 and the projections were for an even greater deficit in 2015. Without the new SafeRide surcharge the long term future of the TLW SafeRide Program was in jeopardy.

The Tavern League of Wisconsin's SafeRide Program is the largest alternative transportation program in the country to address the issue of operating while impaired. TLW patrons in 60 counties can access free rides home through the TLW SafeRide Program.

In 2014, the tremendous success and expansion of the SafeRide Program helped to contribute to the lowest number of alcohol related fatalities in Wisconsin since WW II. Since 2003, Wisconsin has experienced nearly 50% decline in alcohol related fatalities. Over that same time period the SafeRide Program has experienced nearly a 150% increase in free rides home to TLW patrons.

In 2014 the SafeRide Program spent just short of \$1 million providing free rides home to TLW patrons. TLW Members raised over 50% of the money for the program while a surcharge on an OWI conviction providing the other half of the funding. The success of the SafeRide Program has not only contributed to lower alcohol related fatalities but also a dramatic reduction of OWI convictions. Wisconsin has experienced a 28% reduction in OWI convictions since 2004.