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*Office of the Governor*  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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**DiFrancesco Signs Law to Impound Cars of Drunk Drivers**  
*Requires written warnings to those taking responsibility for DWI Arrestees*

Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco today signed a bill authorizing law enforcement agencies to impound the vehicles of persons arrested for driving while intoxicated (DWI). The bill also allows law enforcement to issue responsibility warnings to persons assuming custody of persons arrested for DWI.

"The legislation I signed is a good law, a compassionate law and a life-saving law," said DiFrancesco. "Drunk drivers will no longer be able to simply return to their cars after they are released from police custody."

"Those who pick up a drunk driver from the police station will receive a clear and stern warning of their responsibility not to let that person get back behind the wheel," said the acting Governor.

S-1587, sponsored by Senator Gormley (R-Atlantic) and Assemblymembers Gibson (R-Cape May/Atlantic/Cumberland), Blee (R-Atlantic) and LeFevre (R-Atlantic), was introduced following a tragic incident in Egg Harbor Township in July, 2000 in which a man, John Elliott, was killed by an intoxicated driver who had been arrested, released, and allowed to get back into his vehicle and drive.

"While it is unavoidable-perhaps even proper-that "John's Law" will remain a reminder of the tragic way John Elliott's life was taken, let us strive to ensure that New Jersey citizens will also come to know the heroic way his life was lived," said acting Governor DiFrancesco.

The legislation signed by the acting Governor today, which will be known as "John's Law," provides that whenever a person is summoned by or on behalf of a person who has been arrested for DWI, in order to transport or accompany the arrestee following release, the law enforcement agency shall provide that person with a written statement advising him of his potential criminal and civil liability for permitting or facilitating the arrestee's operation of a motor vehicle while intoxicated. Under current law, a person who permits another person to drive while intoxicated violates the state's DWI statute.

In addition to the written statement, the bill authorizes the arresting law enforcement agency to impound the vehicle operated by the person arrested for DWI for a period up to 12 hours following arrest if the agency determines that the release of the vehicle to the person arrested represents a threat to public safety.

The bill further requires the person to whom the statement is issued to acknowledge, in writing, receipt of the statement. If the person refuses to sign the acknowledgment, the person arrested shall not be released.

According to DiFrancesco, the written statement is intended to increase the awareness of a person picking up someone arrested for driving while intoxicated, warning them of the personal consequences they may suffer if they permit an intoxicated person to drive. Further, he said, the statement and acknowledgement might assist in the prosecution of those individuals who disregard the warning and permit an intoxicated person to drive.