

TALKING POINTS FOR HB 127

- Drugs,- whether they are over the counter, prescription or illegal,- have the potential to severely impair one's ability to drive in many ways.
- Impairment is impairment, no matter the substance.
- **You cannot drive safely if you are impaired.**
- Some prescription and over-the-counter medicines can cause extreme drowsiness, dizziness, and other side effects.
- Drug impaired driving can cause slow or delayed reaction time, alteration in depth perception, reduction in peripheral vision, confusion, inattention, lack of awareness, drowsiness, or hyperactivity; all of which cause a major threat to safety on the road.
- Using two or more drugs at the same time, can amplify the impairing effects of each drug a person has consumed.
- Driving impaired by any substance—alcohol or drugs, whether legal or illegal—is against the law in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Under Louisiana law, a DWI involving impairment by a CDS is treated differently than impairment by a prescription or over the counter medication.
- While a driver under the influence of alcohol or a controlled dangerous has no defense for the impairment, a driver under the influence of prescription or over the counter medication has a defense if he/she has not knowingly consumed quantities over the recommended or prescribed dosage even though they are impaired and the danger to the public is the same.
- Human performance may be impaired at therapeutic or prescribed concentrations of prescription or over the counter medications.
- A therapeutic level of a hypnotic or sedative drug can impair driving due to the central nervous system depressant effects; stimulants can make it difficult for drivers to judge distances and encourage risk taking.
- Even low or sub-clinical concentrations of some drugs in blood are associated with impaired driving.
- Driving while intoxicated (DWI) by prescription drugs should be a crime, just like driving under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- This amendment enhances the ability of prosecutors to prosecute impaired drivers under the influence of prescription drugs.