

Interlock bill one step closer to governor's desk



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By: Associated Press

SANTA FE (AP) - A requirement that all convicted drunken drivers in New Mexico use ignition interlock devices is a step closer to Governor Richardson's desk.

The Senate passed on a 27-to-11 vote an ignition interlock bill on Monday. It's nearly identical to one approved earlier by the House.

It makes the devices, which prevent drivers from starting vehicles when they're intoxicated, mandatory for every convicted drunken driver.

Senator Phil Griego, a San Jose Democrat and a recovering alcoholic, says had the interlock been around when he got his first DWI conviction, he might not have gotten a second.

Opponents say the bill is too punitive. They say there's nothing to prevent offenders from ignoring the mandate or driving someone else's vehicle.

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