

**JC Learning Lab**  
**Sample Essay – Persuasion**

Stricter Driving Laws for the Drinker

In 1982, 331 people were killed, and 4,289 were injured in alcohol-related accidents in South Carolina. The current law of a mandatory \$200 fine and two days in jail allows offenders to be back on the road almost immediately. Stricter driving-under-the-influence (DUI) laws are needed in South Carolina to reduce the number of deaths and injuries caused by drunk drivers.

First, South Carolina should pass a law making thirty days in jail mandatory for any drunk driver. As an alternative, his license should be revoked for sixty days, during which he agrees to attend classes on the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol. Since drunk drivers are not legally responsible for deciding when they should not drive, South Carolina should either make this decision for them or assume the responsibility for future deaths and injuries they might cause.

Since South Carolina does not have the facilities needed to house the 20,686 people with DUI convictions (1982), housing facilities must be provided. John A. Volpe, chairman of the Presidential Commission on Drunk Driving, in the January 17, 1983, edition of U.S. News and World Report, has suggested one possibility. In his article "Send All Drunk Drivers to Jail?" Mr. Volpe suggests setting aside such places as abandoned schools, mental institutions, or police barracks and turning them into special jails where drunk drivers can be held. This arrangement would also prevent mixing them with hardened criminals. The alternative of relinquishing the driver's license would also decrease the number of offenders to be jailed.

While sixty days without a license will remove drunk drivers from the highways, people punished in this way will find transportation, particularly to and from jobs, a problem. Some judges hesitate to revoke or suspend a license because of this. However, there are several possible solutions to this temporary problem. One is public transportation; a second is a carpool in which the offender pays rather than takes a turn at the wheel. A third is to have a family member drive the offender. Since several

solutions are available, transportation problems should not be considered grounds for not suspending the license of a drunk driver.

In conclusion, because drunk drivers endanger themselves and others, South Carolina must pass more rigid laws designed to remove them from the highways. Thirty days in jail or sixty days without a license are better deterrents than a fine. In addition, knowledge gained in the mandatory classes will motivate drivers not to drink and drive in the future.