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**Dead on Arrival: Zero Tolerance Laws Don't Work**

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**Abstract:**

By 1998 all states had passed laws lowering the legal blood alcohol content for drivers under 21 to effectively zero. Theory shows these laws have ambiguous effects on overall fatalities and economic efficiency, and the data show they have little effect on driver behavior. A panel analysis of the 1988-2000 FARS indicates that zero tolerance laws have no material influence on the level of fatalities, while quantile regression reveals virtually no change in the distribution of BAC among drivers involved in fatal accidents.