WHEREAS, the State of Texas has established a statewide traffic safety program designed to reduce traffic accidents and the resulting deaths, injuries, and property damage; and

WHEREAS, in the first six months of 1981, 2,125 persons were killed in motor vehicle traffic accidents which is a 6.3 percent increase over the first six months of 1980; and

WHEREAS, 4,424 persons were killed in motor vehicle traffic accidents on Texas' highways and streets in 1980 -- a record number of traffic fatalities for the fourth consecutive year; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the State of Texas maintained over 267,000 miles of public highways; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the total number of persons holding valid Texas driver's licenses exceeded 9.4 million and the total number of motor vehicles registered in Texas exceeded 10.8 million; and

WHEREAS, the two leading causes of traffic deaths are DWI-related accidents and excessive speed-related accidents; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, in addition to deaths, thousands of persons were injured on Texas' highways in DWI-related accidents; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, 81,220 drivers suspected of DWI were administered alcohol breath tests and 85 percent were found to be above the legal point of intoxication; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the Highway Patrol of the Department of Public Safety charged 40,273 motorists with DWI and in the first six months of 1981, 21,905 motorists have been charged with DWI; and

WHEREAS, during the past five years, Texas' population increased 16 percent, licensed drivers increased 22 percent, registered motor vehicles increased 20 percent, total vehicle miles traveled increased 22 percent, fatal traffic accidents increased 30 percent and the number of authorized Highway Patrol officers increased only 2 percent; and

WHEREAS, the current strength of the Highway Patrol Service of the Department of Public Safety provides only one officer, including supervisors, for every 133 miles of highway; and

WHEREAS, all Texans are deeply concerned over the increase in traffic fatalities and injuries (especially DWI-related), and the safety of all citizens traveling on Texas' highways is imperative.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, William P. Clements, Jr., Governor of Texas, under the authority vested in me do hereby create and establish the GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON TRAFFIC SAFETY, hereinafter referred to as TASK FORCE.
The TASK FORCE shall consist of not more than fifteen members appointed by the Governor who shall serve for two-year terms and at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall designate a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from the membership who shall serve in those positions at the pleasure of the Governor.

The TASK FORCE is charged with the following responsibilities:

a. examine in detail the scope of Texas' existing traffic safety programs and the allocation of current law enforcement manpower protecting Texas' motorists;

b. examine in detail the current laws pertaining to the offense of DWI:
   (1) need for more stringent and mandatory penalties/fines;
   (2) need for improvement in existing laws;
   (3) judicial discretion in sentencing; and
   (4) pattern of filing public intoxication charges in lieu of DWI.

c. identify the peak periods in which most alcohol-related traffic accidents occur on Texas' highways and propose strategies to combat this problem;

d. examine in detail the need for more stringent eligibility requirements to obtain a Texas driver's license and the desirability of periodic retesting of Texas drivers;

e. examine in detail the amount of resources allotted to the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Highways and Public Transportation to provide for a safe and expeditious transportation system for Texas;

f. inform the State's criminal justice officials, educators and the general public of the statewide traffic safety program with emphasis on the commitment of the leadership and criminal justice professionals for enforcement and prosecution of DWI offenses to enhance safety on Texas' highways;

g. inform the general public through a statewide education program of the physical effects of alcohol, the subsequent impairment of motor skills on the driver, and the number of motorists in Texas killed and injured due to alcohol-related traffic accidents;

h. make recommendations to the Governor regarding necessary legislation or actions by the Governor's Office which will promote the purposes of the TASK FORCE; and

i. perform other duties as may be requested by the Governor.

On or before January 1, 1983, the TASK FORCE shall make a complete written report of its activities and recommendations to the Governor.

The TASK FORCE shall meet regularly at the call of the Chairman. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum. The Chairman shall, with the consultation of the Governor, establish the agenda for the TASK FORCE meetings.

The Traffic Safety Section, Safety and Maintenance Operations Division of the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation, and the Texas Department of Public Safety shall serve as coordinating staff to the TASK FORCE.

The members of the TASK FORCE shall serve without compensation and shall be responsible for their expenses.
All state agencies and units of local government are hereby directed to cooperate with and assist the TASK FORCE in the performance of its duties.

This Executive Order shall be effective immediately and shall remain in full force and effect until modified, amended, or rescinded by me.

Given under my hand this 1st day of December, 1981.

WILLIAM P. CLEMENTS, JR.
Governor of Texas

Secretary of State