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September 2, 2013

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7/7/2012 9:00:00 AM

## Immunity law will save lives

OUR VIEW

One new bill that became Indiana law on July 1 has been overshadowed by the state's new smoking ban.

The Indiana Lifeline Bill is intended to encourage people to seek emergency medical attention for their friends by providing them with immunity from certain alcohol-related charges if they call an ambulance for someone in trouble.

The bill is one of the 161 new laws passed by the Indiana General Assembly last session, and one of its backers and several state legislators say it is among the most significant of the bills going into effect.

In a story by Kasey Husk of the Bloomington Herald-Times, Indiana University Student Association President Justin Kingsolver said the Lifeline bill "removes all disincentives" that could have prevented students from calling for medical attention for someone who appears to be in trouble, by offering immunity from offenses like public intoxication, minor consumption or transportation of an alcoholic beverages. Immunity is not offered for some offenses, including drunk driving or drug possession.

Husk reported that "pushing for such a bill was a key campaign promise for Kingsolver, who said he got the idea from talking to students organizations, among them many fraternities and sororities, about the issues they faced. Every fraternity and sorority - and plenty of other students - had been in the situation where they were faced with the decision of whether to call an ambulance and fear of consequences for the student or organization was often a consideration," he said.

Kingsolver and about 15 other IU students partnered with students at other state universities, to lobby for the bill. The IU students also played a role in enacting a similar school policy that makes calling for emergency help for someone a "mitigating circumstance" for organizations facing consequences from the university, he said.

There is no question this new law will potentially save lives.

In December, a fraternity decided to call for aid for a student who ultimately was discovered to have a blood-alcohol content of .42 percent and who doctors said could have been dead "within 15 more minutes" if they didn't seek medical attention.

When under the influence of alcohol some people don't always make the right decision. This new law will reinforce appropriate behavior. Lives will be saved.

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