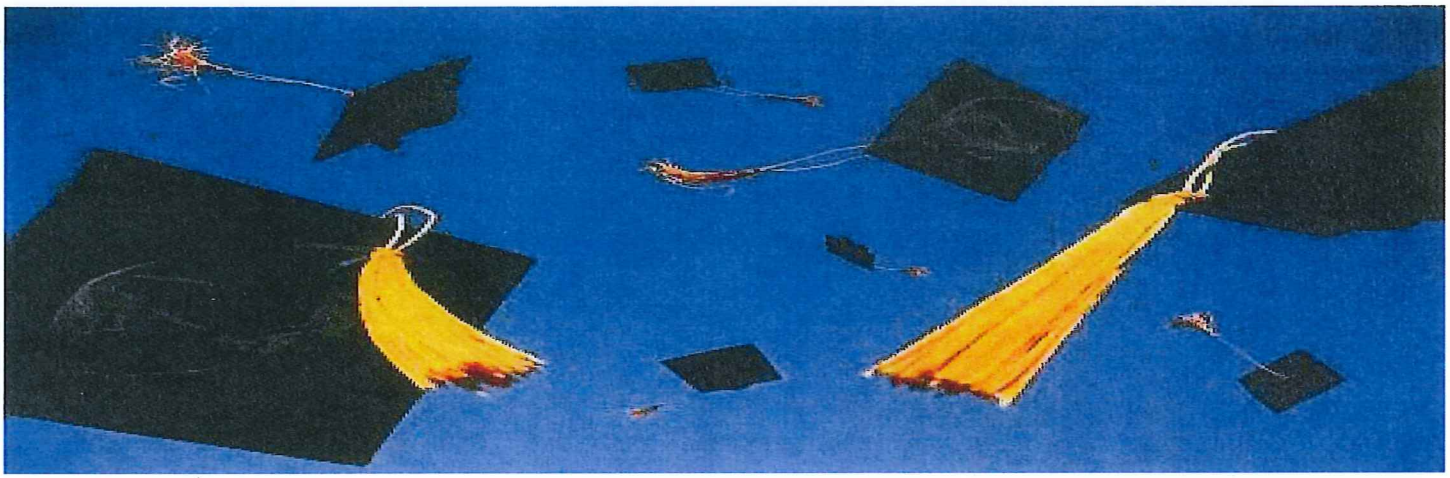
A MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT ATTORNEY MICHAEL O'KEEFE



A SAFE PROM AND GRADUATION IS A COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

I ask that you join with me to ensure that the upcoming Graduation and Prom Season is a safe one for all students, as well as the community. Unfortunately, as District Attorney, I know that drinking and driving is still a tragic reality especially among our younger citizens. Although we will continue tough enforcement and strong penalties, I cannot emphasize enough the role parents can play in prevention efforts.

I feel that it is important for you to realize that you have a legal duty to exercise reasonable care to prevent your minor children from inflicting harm on themselves or others. When the parents know or should know that a child is driving while under the influence of alcohol, the parents may be liable for failure to take reasonable means to prevent any injuries or damage resulting from the child's drunk driving.

Parents should also realize that, as social hosts of a party at which alcohol is served to minors, the parents can be criminally prosecuted, as well as being held liable for the injuries or damage caused by the negligent operation of an automobile by a guest who leaves the party intoxicated.

I also feel it is important to remind you that, even if substance use or abuse is not involved, all too often young people fail to recognize the consequences of fatigue. There have been a number of serious accidents involving young people coming from parties who have not been drinking, but who are so tired, they cannot adequately control their vehicle. Please make certain that appropriate measures are taken to prevent fatigue-related accidents.

Let's do all we can to assure a safe and healthy Spring Season for all of us.

MICHAEL O'KEEFE
District Attorney
Cape and Islands