Driver fatigue and road deaths

Madam, I note that Ivor Cally, Minister for Transport, is concerned that driver fatigue is not sufficiently recognised as a factor in road accidents (The Irish Times, December 1st).

Mr Cally is aware of his contacts with gardaí that fatigue plays a fundamental role in a number of accidents and goes on to exhort motorists to become more aware of the danger. In this he is strongly supported by a garda spokesperson, Inspector Ray McHugh, who urges tired motorists to exercise common sense by slowing down and taking a break instead of continuing to drive.

In the light of the foregoing, anyone explain to me why it is almost impossible to find properly signposted and properly designated lay-by on our roads? Surely the provision of proper lay-bys at reasonably frequent intervals would encourage tired motorists to rest and thereby contribute to road safety. — Yours, etc.,

M. D. KENNEDY, Silverstream Park, Glenageary, Co. Dublin.

Ireland's drink problem

Madam, — To counter our deranged binge-drinking culture, Liam Lawlor (December 1) suggests the most effective measures are to increase the price of drink and raise the legal drinking age 21.

On the first point, the price of drink in Ireland has risen steadily in the past decade, making this one of the most expensive places in Europe to enjoy a drink. Has the level of drinking decreased as a result of this? No, it has increased, which would suggest raising the price of drink is effective in tackling this issue, not in the long term way. As regards relating the age of drinking to 21, how did this prove effective? If 18-year-olds can get their hands on drink when the legal age is 18, I don’t think they’ll have much problem if we increase the limit three years. Also, increasing the legal age to 21 in a culture in which ours would probably pro...