

Cousin of Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse pleads to charges connected with drunk driving incident in Northampton

Published: Apr. 17, 2014, 6:32 p.m.

By [Fred Contrada](#) | fcontrada@repub.com

NORTHAMPTON — Nicholas Duclos, a cousin of [Holyoke Mayor Alex B. Morse](#), has resolved charges connected with a drunken driving incident in Northampton so that he will pay a modest amount in fines but have no criminal record.

Duclos, 22, of 83 Beacon St., [Holyoke](#), told police he was socializing with Morse at Bishop's Lounge in Northampton on the night of March 8 when he took the mayor's city-issued car, saying he wanted to find something to eat. Observing him driving erratically, police followed Duclos onto Pleasant Street, where he drove up onto the Bill Nagle Walkway, part of Northampton's rail trail system. He was administered sobriety tests and arrested. Although Duclos said his cousin gave him permission to take the car, Morse told police otherwise. When he realized his keys were missing, Morse called the police.

In a statement to the press, Morse said he felt "betrayed and disappointed" by his cousin's behavior.

"Nick made a stupid decision and he should have known there was absolutely no reason for him to have taken the car," said Morse, who added that he still loves his cousin.

Duclos was charged in Northampton District Court with operating under the influence of alcohol, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, using a motor vehicle without authority, speeding and failure to stop. On Monday, he pleaded sufficient facts for a finding of guilty on two of those charges and "responsible" on the other four.

Judge Rita Koenigs fined Duclos a total of \$300. Duclos will also lose his driver's license for 45 days. However, because the charges were either decriminalized or continued without a finding, none of them will end up on Duclos' criminal record.