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LOCAL HALLOWEEN **SOBERRIDE SUCCESS**

GREATER WASHINGTON ANTI-DUI INITIATIVE SUCCEEDS DESPITE D.C. CABBIE STRIKE

OVER 280 SOBERRIDES PROVIDED LAST NIGHT

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n, D.C., Nov. 1 – Despite a cab strike in the District of Columbia, the Washington-metropolitan area’s *SoberRide* program provided 281 free cab rides home to would be drunk drivers this Halloween – with over 50-percent (143) of those free Halloween cab rides taking place in the District.

Provided by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the Halloween *SoberRide* program began on Halloween (yesterday, Wednesday, October 31st) at 8:00 pm and continued until 4:00 am today as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

“For SoberRide’s hours of operation this Halloween, this translates into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington’s roadways better than every two minutes,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President.

Last night’s ridership level represents a nearly three-percent increase from that of WRAP’s 2006 Halloween *SoberRide* offering (then totaling 273 riders).

Even in the face of the District of Columbia’s taxi strike, WRAP prided itself in having what it said was enough contingencies in place to provide sufficient *SoberRide* coverage last night. According to WRAP, such contingencies included increased staffing of its taxicab operations, dispatching rides amongst the nine separate cab companies it contracts to provide the anti-drunk driving service and even having some of these same companies’ sedan service subsidiaries on stand-by in case they were needed due to yesterday’s cabbie strike.

During *SoberRide*'s eight-hour period this Halloween, area residents celebrating with alcohol could call the toll-free *SoberRide* phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost (up to a \$ 50 fare), safe way home. AT&T wireless users could call #-TAXI for the same service. Local taxicab companies throughout the Washington-metropolitan area provided this no-cost service to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

SoberRide was offered in the District of Columbia; throughout the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and throughout the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, (eastern) Loudoun and Prince William.

Sponsors of this year's Halloween *SoberRide* offering included: Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation, Red Top Cab of Arlington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

Participating taxicab companies included: Alexandria Yellow Cab; Barwood; Fairfax Yellow Cab; Loudoun Yellow Cab; Manassas Cab Company; Red Top Cab; Silver Cab of Prince George's County; Taxi Transportation Services; and Yellow Cab of Prince William County.

Since 1993, alone, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 38,116 free cab rides home to would-be impaired drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Commemorating its 25th anniversary this year (1982-2007), the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning, public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average.

More information about WRAP's *SoberRide* initiative can be found at www.soberride.com. For more information on WRAP, go to either www.wrap.org or http://www.wrap.org/2002-2007_highlights_annualreport.pdf.

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