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OVER 600 SOBERRIDES **PROVIDED ON ST. PAT'S**

LOCAL PROGRAM REMOVES 'WOULD-BE DRUNK DRIVER EVERY 84-SECONDS' LAST NIGHT

Washington, DC, Mar. 18 – The Washington-metropolitan area's *SoberRide* program provided a record 603 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers this St. Patrick's Day.

Provided by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the St. Patty's Day *SoberRide* program began on St. Patrick's Day (yesterday, Saturday, March 17th) at 4:00 pm and continued until 6:00 am today as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

"For SoberRide's hours of operation this St. Patrick's Day, this translates into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every 84-seconds," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President.

During *SoberRide's* 14-hour period this St. Patty's Day, 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. Cingular 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 St. Patrick's Day *SoberRide* offering included Anheuser-Busch, Baileys & Bushmills, Cingular, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation, Red Top Cab and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

In addition, nearly a dozen-and-half of the Washington-metropolitan area's better-known Irish restaurants also united to ensure a safe St. Patrick's Day celebration this year by sponsoring *SoberRide*. These dining establishments included: **Biddy Mulligan's** (DC); **Daniel O'Connell's Restaurant** (VA); **The Dubliner Restaurant & Pub** (DC); **Fado** (DC); **Ireland Four Courts** (VA); **Ireland's Four Provinces** (VA); **Irish Channel Restaurant** (DC); **Kelly's Irish Times** (DC); **Mackey's Public House** (DC); **Martin's Tavern est. 1933** (DC); **McKeever's Pub** (VA); **Murphy's Grand Irish Pubs** (DC & VA); **Old Brogue Irish Pub** (VA); **O'Sullivan's Irish Pub** (VA); **Ri Ra Irish Pub** (MD); and **Sine Irish Pub** (VA).

Participating taxicab companies include: 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.

Last night's *SoberRide* ridership surpasses last year's then record St. Patrick's Day *SoberRide* ridership of 580 riders.

Founded in 1982, 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. Since 1993, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 37,582 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

For more information, visit www.soberride.com.

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