

CONTACT: Kurt Gregory Erickson
President

PHONE: W. 703/893-0461
MOBILE: 703/625-2303

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 31, 2010

DC-AREA SOBERRIDE PROGRAM
SAFELY TRANSPORTS HOME NEARLY 500
ADULT REVELERS ON HALLOWEEN
LOCAL PROGRAM REMOVES 'WOULD-BE DRUNK
DRIVER EVERY 62-SECONDS' LAST NIGHT

Washington, D.C., Oct. 31 – Last night's *SoberRide* program provided 461 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Washington-metropolitan area

Provided by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the Halloween *SoberRide* program began last night at 10:00 pm and continued until 6:00 am today (Halloween) as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period. (WRAP's scheduling of its *SoberRide* program on the Saturday night prior to Halloween was purposeful and was in tandem with yesterday evening's adult-oriented Halloween events.)

"For SoberRide's hours of operations this Halloween, last night's ridership translated into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every 62-seconds," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 58-percent of all U.S. traffic deaths occurring during Halloween are caused by drunk drivers.*

During *SoberRide's* eight-hour period this Halloween, area residents ages 21 and older and celebrating with alcohol could call the toll-free *SoberRide* phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost (up to a \$ 30 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.

The new \$ 30 fare cap was instituted by the charity operating the region's *SoberRide* program (the previous *SoberRide* fare cap was \$ 50) and corresponds to the fact that the majority of last year's *SoberRide* fares were under thirty-dollars.** *SoberRide* users were responsible for any amount of a *SoberRide* cab fare above \$ 30.

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, Diageo, 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; Yellow Cab of D.C.; and Yellow Cab of Prince William County.

Since 1993, alone, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 49,188 free cab rides home to would-be impaired drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Founded in 1982, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (www.wrap.org) is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area. 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.

* **Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, see:**
<http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/planners/Halloween2010/media/TalkingPoints-sn.doc>

** **Percent of FY 2009-10 SoberRide fares under \$ 30:**
66%