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ANNUAL EFFORT TO COMBAT
DRUNK DRIVING IN GREATER WASHINGTON
KICKS-OFF TONIGHT

LOCAL FREE CAB RIDE SERVICE AIMS TO DETER DRUNK DRIVING

Washington, DC, Dec. 16 – Combating that time of year classified by U.S. Government officials as “one of the deadliest times on America’s roadways due to an increase in drunk driving,”* area officials announced today the launch of an anti-drunk driving initiative designed to reduce holiday-oriented, alcohol-related traffic incidents in Greater Washington.

Specifically, a coalition of local law enforcement officials, business professionals and area citizens announced today that free cab rides will be offered throughout the winter holidays to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the annual Holiday *SoberRide* program will operate between **10:00 pm and 6:00 am each evening between Friday, December 16, 2011 and Saturday, December 31, 2011** as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During the evening hours, between December 16th and December 31st, Washington-metropolitan area residents celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free *SoberRide* phone number **1-800-200-TAXI** and be afforded a no-cost (up to \$ 30 fare), safe way home. (AT&T wireless users can dial **#TAXI** for the same service.)

“Last December, alone, over 2,500 (2,530) Greater Washington residents did the right thing and availed themselves of this lifesaving service rather than possibly driving home impaired,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President. ***“For SoberRide’s hours of operation during just last New Year’s Eve (967), such ridership translated into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from our shared roadways every 30-seconds.”***

SoberRide is 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. In these areas, local taxicab companies will be providing this no-cost service to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

Since 1993, WRAP’s *SoberRide* program has provided 52,841 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Sponsors of the 2011 Holiday *SoberRide* campaign include: Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Diageo, GEICO, MillersCoors/Premium Distributors of Washington, D.C., Red Top Cab, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington, Volkswagen Group of America and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

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

Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program 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.holidaybuzzed.com>*

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