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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREE JULY 4TH CAB RIDES THROUGHOUT GREATER WASHINGTON

**** NEARLY HALF OF ALL JULY 4TH TRAFFIC DEATHS ARE CAUSED BY DRUNK DRIVERS ****

Washington, DC, June 15 – As a direct response to Independence Day being that U.S. holiday when nearly half (43%) of all traffic deaths are alcohol-related,* a local non-profit group will be offering free cab rides to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area this Fourth of July.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the Independence Day *SoberRide* program will be in operation beginning at 10:00 pm on Monday, July 4th and continue until 4:00 am on the following day (7/5) as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday period.

During this six-hour period, 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 a \$ 30 fare), safe way home.

AT&T wireless customers can dial **#-TAXI** for the same service. Local taxicab companies throughout the Washington-metropolitan area provide this no-cost service to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

“Last Independence Day nearly four-hundred (389) Greater Washington residents did the right thing by using SoberRide rather than driving home possibly impaired,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President. ***“For SoberRide’s hours of operation last July 4th, this translated into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington’s roadways every 74-seconds.”***

According to statistics gathered from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration over the past 25 years show that, on average, nearly half of all deadly traffic crashes over each year’s July 4th holiday involved some level of alcohol. Motor vehicle traffic crashes killed 410 people during the Fourth of July holiday period in 2009. Of that number, 40-percent involved a driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter or higher.

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.

Sponsors of this year's Independence Day *SoberRide* offering include Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Diageo, ExxonMobil, GEICO, Millers Coors/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.

Since 1993, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 52,265 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

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-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. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, *SoberRide*.

For more information, visit WRAP's web site at www.wrap.org.

* Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, see:
<http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/planners/July4th2011/>