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WEATHER DAMPENS LOCAL **JULY 4TH SOBERRIDE EFFORT**

LOCAL PROGRAM STILL SUCCEEDS IN REMOVING 'WOULD BE DRUNK DRIVERS EVERY THREE MINUTES' LAST NIGHT

Washington, DC, July 5 – Last night's weather not only dampened many local firework displays but so too the Washington-metropolitan area's July 4th *SoberRide* program.

The local *SoberRide* program provided 111 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers this Independence Day (below the more than 300 average rides for this annual Independence Day, anti-drunk driving effort*).

Provided by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2011 Independence Day *SoberRide* program began yesterday, July 4th, at 10:00 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.

"Even with last night's below average ridership and for its hours of operation this July 4th, SoberRide proved successful in removing a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every three minutes," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President.

During *SoberRide*'s six-hour period this Independence 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 \$ 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.

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 Independence Day *SoberRide* offering included 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 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, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 52,376 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**.

** Average Independence Day SoberRide ridership for the last eight years (2003-2010) = 314*

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