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OVER 200 SOBERRIDES PROVIDED ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN GREATER WASHINGTON

*ST. PAT'S RIDERSHIP REMOVES 'WOULD-BE DRUNK DRIVER
EVERY THREE-AND-A-HALF MINUTES' LAST NIGHT*

Washington, D.C., Mar. 18 – The Washington-metropolitan area's *SoberRide* program provided 212 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 at 4:00 pm yesterday (St. Patrick's Day) and continued until 4:00 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 three-and-a-half minutes," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President.

During this 12-hour period, 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.

Last night's ridership for WRAP's St. Patrick's Day *SoberRide* program, clearly affected by the Irish holiday falling on a Sunday and with most revelers returning to work today, was considerably less than the 460 *SoberRide* users WRAP has averaged for its annual St. Patty's Day campaign over the last five years.

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.

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, AT&T, Diageo, Giant Food, MillerCoors, Red Top Cab, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington, Volkswagen Group of America and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

In addition, seven of the Washington-metropolitan area's better-known Irish restaurants have also united to ensure a safe St. Patrick's Day celebration this year by sponsoring *SoberRide*. These dining establishments include: The Dubliner Restaurant & Pub (DC); Fadó (DC); James Hoban's Irish Restaurant & Bar (DC); Kelly's Irish Times (DC); Martin's Tavern est. 1933 (DC); Murphy's Grand Irish Pubs (DC & VA); and Siné Irish Pub (VA).

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.

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, 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 57,990 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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