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CONTACT: Kurt Gregory Erickson, President  
Washington Regional Alcohol Program  
tel 703-893-0461 cell 703-625-2303

## Virginia's 'Beautiful' New Anti-Drunk Driving Campaign Kicks Off

*Effort Celebrates Beauty of Designated Drivers in a Commonwealth Where  
Over One-Third of All Traffic Deaths Involve Drunk Drivers*



(TV spot at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ2Xpa6R43U>)

**Falls Church, VA, Sept. 8** – Virginia's 2015 Checkpoint Strikeforce anti-drunk driving campaign gets under way this week with the release of television and radio commercials celebrating the beauty of designated drivers.

The commercials are part of a larger campaign to proactively communicate that nothing is more "beautiful" than a safe ride home after a night of drinking, whether it's in a cab, public transportation, with a sober friend or through a transportation network company such as Uber or Lyft.

Eighteen broadcast and 23 cable television stations will air an estimated 70,000 ads across Virginia. Nearly 50 radio stations in the Commonwealth will broadcast an estimated 14,000 radio ads supported by messages run on both digital and social media channels, as well as in Virginia's movie theaters and on billboards in the Commonwealth.

In addition, the campaign will feature a "Beautiful" tour around the state where designated sober drivers will be publicly thanked for providing a safe ride home. Tour stops

include Arlington, Richmond and Virginia Beach. Dates and locations will be released at a later date.

Also created is a hashtag social media campaign: #BeautifulRide, where anyone can celebrate those taxi, transit and designated sober drivers who deliver home safely passengers whom have been drinking alcohol.

The primary target for the campaign is males, ages 21-35. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data shows that males in that age group are disproportionately involved in DUI-alcohol related fatalities. According to 2014 Virginia Traffic Crash Facts ([http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/safety/crash\\_data/crash\\_facts/crash\\_facts\\_14.pdf](http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/safety/crash_data/crash_facts/crash_facts_14.pdf)) prepared by the DMV, the Virginia Highway Safety Office, nearly 36-percent (35.85%) of all of Virginia's highway fatalities last year were alcohol-related. Over 40-percent (40.63%) of those killed in Virginia's 2014 alcohol-related traffic crashes were ages 21-35.

"There is no question that we need to try innovative ways to reach young adult males with a solution-based message about drinking and driving," said Kurt Erickson, President of the Virginia-based Washington Regional Alcohol Program, the project director of the Commonwealth's now 14<sup>th</sup>-annual Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign. "As all drunk driving incidents are completely preventable, it's important to stress that such incidents are thwarted by simply designating a sober driver."

The television and radio advertising is aimed at the planning ahead, or the "awareness" aspect of the campaign. The television commercial (viewable at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ2Xpa6R43U>) features a young male enjoying a "guys night out" drinking and eating with friends at a sports bar and how his safe ride home at the end of the evening is "beautiful."

Over half (58%) of 800 drivers recently surveyed in Virginia and Maryland admitted to driving after having a few drinks or being driven by a driver who had a few drinks, even though these same respondents consider drunk drivers a "serious danger," second only to using cell phones or texting. A Checkpoint Strikeforce public opinion survey of 800 licensed male drivers ages 21-35 was conducted this month by the Washington, D.C.-based Lake Research Partners. In addition, the survey found that while designating a driver was the top answer for how 21-35 year olds "plan a safe ride home," less than half (48%) frequently plan for this transportation before going out.

Checkpoint Strikeforce is part of the national Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign. It is a researched-based multi-state enforcement and public outreach initiative whose goal is to get impaired drivers off the road using sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols when and where drunk driving is most likely to occur. It also aims to educate the public about the dangers and consequences of drunk driving and make the public aware of active enforcement efforts that are taking place.

*The Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign is supported by a grant from DMV, the Virginia Highway Safety Office to the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).*