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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NEARLY 600 USE LOCAL SOBERRIDE PROGRAM ON NEW YEAR'S**

### ***OVER 1,400 USE GREATER WASHINGTON FREE CAB SERVICE THROUGHOUT DECEMBER TO PREVENT DUI***

Washington, DC, Jan. 1 – Five-hundred-and-eighty (580) persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used the free cab ride service, SoberRide®, last night through early this morning as opposed to possibly driving home drunk.

*“For its hours of operation on New Year's alone, this level of ridership translates into SoberRide removing a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every 49-seconds,”* said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program, the organization conducting the region's SoberRide® effort.

WRAP's most recent holiday SoberRide® offering – which concluded at 6:00 am this morning after kicking-off and running nightly since December 11, 2015 – provided a total of 1,456 total, free cabs rides to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

Last night's New Year's SoberRide® ridership represented both a 38-percent increase from last year's New Year's period (420 > 580) as well as the highest level of SoberRide® ridership on New Year's in half a decade.

The most recent holiday SoberRide® program operated between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am each evening between Friday, December 11, 2015 and Friday, January 1, 2016 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period. During that time, Washington-metropolitan 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 \$ 30 fare), safe way home. (AT&T wireless users could dial #WRAP for the same service.)

Since 1993, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 64,641 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

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

Sponsors of this year's Holiday SoberRide® offering included AAA Mid-Atlantic, Anheuser-Busch, Constellation Brands, Diageo, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Giant Food, MillerCoors, Red Top Cab of Arlington, 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; Northern Virginia Checker Cab; 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 (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average.

For more information, visit [www.wrap.org](http://www.wrap.org).

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