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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 4, 2016**

**SECOND YEAR CINCO DE MAYO**  
**SOBERRIDE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO DETER**  
**DUI IN GREATER WASHINGTON**  
***OVER ONE-THIRD OF U.S. HIGHWAY DEATHS ON***  
***CINCO DE MAYO INVOLVE DRUNK DRIVERS***

**Arlington, VA, May 4 –** Preparing to combat that time of year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), over one-third (33.8%) of all U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers\*, **free cab rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area on the Mexican holiday, Cinco de Mayo (May 5<sup>th</sup>).**

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) and announced at a bilingual (English & Spanish) news conference this morning at Fuego Cocina y Tequileria in Arlington, the Cinco de Mayo SoberRide® program (now in its second year after being inaugurated in 2015) will be in operation beginning at 4:00 pm tomorrow, Thursday, May 5, 2016 and continue until 4:00 am on Friday, May 6, 2016 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

During this 12-hour period, area residents celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free SoberRide® phone number **1-800-200-TAXI** (8294) and be afforded a no-cost (up to a \$ 30 fare), safe way home. AT&T wireless customers can dial **#WRAP** for the same service.

Last year, over 160 (164) persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's first new holiday SoberRide® offering in nearly two decades. The charity also offers its SoberRide® program on St. Patrick's Day, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays leading up to and including New Year's Eve.

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.

***“According to government figures, over a third of U.S. highway deaths on Cinco de Mayo involve drunk drivers,”*** said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's

President. ***“Worse, nearly a fifth of these drivers involved in fatal crashes had blood alcohol concentration levels of .15 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.

At today’s news conference, officials with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles unveiled 2015 traffic data showing a more than seven-percent (7.57%, 700 > 753) increase in highway fatalities occurring in the Commonwealth last year reversing a previous two year decline in such deaths. Conversely, DMV data showed that alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in the state decreased by five-percent (5.12%) last year. In 2015, more than 20,000 (20,768) persons were convicted of driving under the influence in Virginia.

**VIRGINIA DMV’S 2015 “CRASH FACTS” NOW ONLINE AT:**

[http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/safety/#crash\\_data/crash\\_facts/index.asp](http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/safety/#crash_data/crash_facts/index.asp)

Sponsors of this year’s Cinco de Mayo SoberRide® campaign include 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, Glory Days Grill, 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 include: 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 historically keeping the metro-Washington area’s alcohol-related traffic deaths lower than the national average.

Since 1993, WRAP’s SoberRide® program has provided 64,891 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

For more information, visit **[www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com)**.

***\*Source: NHTSA (6 pm May 2, 2014 to 5:59 am May 6, 2014):***

<http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/CAMPAIGNS/Drunk+Driving/Buzzed+Driving+is+Drunk+Driving/Cinco+de+Mayo/2016+Fact+Sheet>