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**WITH DRUNK DRIVERS INVOLVED IN ONE-THIRD
OF LABOR DAY TRAFFIC DEATHS, VIRGINIA GOVERNOR AND
OFFICIALS GEAR-UP FOR HOLIDAY TRAVEL SAFETY**

***VIRGINIA AVERAGES DOUBLE-DIGIT NUMBER OF
TRAFFIC DEATHS OVER SEPTEMBER HOLIDAY***

****COMMONWEALTH LAUNCHES 16TH-ANNUAL CHECKPOINT STRIKEFORCE CAMPAIGN****

Richmond, VA, Aug. 31 – With a third of all U.S. traffic deaths over the Labor Day holiday period involving drunk drivers and Virginia averaging a double-digit number of traffic fatalities during the summer-ending holiday, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe today joined other state officials in outlining plans to ensure safety on the Commonwealth's roadways this weekend through the year's end.

At a Checkpoint Strikeforce news conference held this afternoon in Richmond, McAuliffe and Virginia State Police officials announced markedly stepped-up law enforcement throughout Virginia to counter Labor Day's historically deadly toll including the participation of nearly 200 local law enforcement agencies along with State Police area offices deploying literally hundreds of anti-drunk driving efforts under the banner of the 16th-annual traffic safety campaign.

"While I want every Virginian to enjoy their Labor Day weekend, they must do so without endangering themselves or other drivers on the road," said McAuliffe. ***"As in years past, this strikeforce campaign ensures that individuals who choose to break the law and drive under the influence will be caught and be prosecuted. Those penalties include mandatory ignition interlock installation on the offender's vehicle as well as fines up to \$ 2,500, suspension periods up to one year and jail sentences also up to one year."***

Over the 2015 Labor Day holiday period, one third (33%) of all U.S. traffic fatalities involved drivers who were impaired (.08+ blood alcohol concentration [BAC]), according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In Virginia, the Commonwealth averaged eleven traffic fatalities during the Labor Day holiday periods between 2010 and 2016, according to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

McAuliffe made his remarks today alongside officials from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia State Police, AAA Mid-Atlantic and the Virginia-based Washington Regional Alcohol Program.

AAA Mid-Atlantic estimates that close to one-million Virginians will travel this Labor Day holiday weekend. The vast majority of those traveling will be doing so on Virginia roadways where gas prices are already increasing daily due to Hurricane Harvey's impact in the Gulf of Mexico. Virginia is among a number of states which are expected to see the largest gas prices increases in the nation, as the Gulf Coast is the primary provider of gasoline for the region, according to AAA.

In addition to refinery shut downs in the gulf, today the Colonial Pipeline, which provides nearly 40 percent of gas to the southeast, will suspend operations. While this news is concerning and there are a number of uncertainties surrounding the situation, the supply of gasoline across the country is strong at 229 billion barrels, its highest level in five years according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. As a result and for the near future, there should be an adequate supply of gasoline which can be moved around the country to meet demand. In

addition, alternate modes of transporting gasoline, other pipelines, trucks and barges are being used to move supply to where it is needed. Some stations may run low and regional shortages could occur in Texas and the surrounding region, for the moment, shortages are not expected in Virginia, according to AAA.

Although, the full impact of Hurricane Harvey on Gulf Coast refineries is still unknown, AAA estimates gas price increases of up to 25 cents in the Commonwealth. Increases could, however, go higher than 25 cents per gallon if refinery damage is extensive.

Started in 2002, Virginia's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign is part of a research-based multi-state, zero-tolerance initiative designed to get impaired drivers off the roads using checkpoints and patrols along with education about the dangers and consequences of driving while intoxicated. While aiming to reach all potential drunk drivers, the statewide enforcement and education campaign specifically focuses on males ages 21 to 35, a demographic representing nearly a third of all persons killed in Virginia's alcohol-related traffic crashes last year.

Nearly 200 local law enforcement agencies along with Virginia State Police area offices are participating in Virginia's 2017 Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign. In tandem with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" enforcement mobilization, Virginia law enforcement members will be conducting approximately 150 sobriety checkpoints and 520 saturation patrols this week through the 2017 Labor Day holiday period.

"Under the unifying Checkpoint Strikeforce banner, state police and our local law enforcement partners across Virginia will be deploying high visibility enforcement efforts to identify and apprehend impaired drivers," said DMV Commissioner Richard D. Holcomb. ***"This statewide, highway and public safety effort is important as to-date this year, Virginia has, unfortunately, experienced nearly 50 more traffic fatalities than this same time last year."***

As of August 25th of this year, 503 persons were killed in traffic crashes in Virginia in 2017. At this same time last year, 456 persons were killed in traffic crashes in the Commonwealth.

In addition to a significant multimedia campaign featuring approximately 37,500 campaign ads running on nearly 70 television, cable and radio stations in Virginia as well as both movie theater and digital advertising in the Commonwealth, Virginia's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign incorporates a stepped-up law enforcement effort to promote a multijurisdictional fight against drunk driving. State and local police increase visibility through sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols. Last year, 19,925 people were convicted of DUI in Virginia.

Virginia's 30-second Checkpoint Strikeforce television spot, which celebrates the "beauty" of designated sober drivers, can be viewed online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDoe_lbW-R0. The TV spots, introduced in 2015, proactively communicate that "nothing's more beautiful than a safe ride home" whether it's in a cab, public transportation, with a sober friend or through a transportation network company such as Uber or Lyft.

Over half (56%) of 1,000 male drivers ages 21-35 surveyed in Virginia and Maryland this month (August 15 – 25) admitted to either driving after having a few drinks or being driven by someone who had a few drinks. These 21-35 year old drivers said that the main reasons that they would drive after drinking or ride in a car with someone who has been drinking is because they either made a judgement call that they were "sober enough" (30%) or because of impaired judgment from drinking (20%). The 2017 Checkpoint Strikeforce public opinion survey was conducted by the Washington, D.C.-based Lake Research Partners. The survey additionally found that while designating a driver was the top answer as to how 21-35 year olds "plan a safe ride home," less than two-thirds (62%) frequently plan ahead for said safe ride home.

Virginia's Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign is supported by a grant from DMV, the Virginia Highway Safety Office to the nonprofit and Falls Church-based Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).

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