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[Insert your NAME]
[Insert your E-MAIL ADDRESS]

CONTACT
[Insert your TELEPHONE NUMBER]
[Insert Date]

[STATE/LOCALITY] Launches *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization

Buckle Up or Pay Up – Law Enforcement to Increase Safety Belt Enforcement May 26-June 4

From May 24 to June 6, law enforcement officers across/from [Insert STATE/LOCALITY] will increase enforcement of the State's safety belt laws as part of the nationwide *Click It or Ticket* Mobilization. Those who fail to buckle up will be issued a ticket that carries a fine of [Insert \$ AMOUNT] in [Insert STATE/LOCALITY].

The goal of the effort, which will put a special emphasis on teens and young adults, is to boost the State's [insert BELT USE RATE]% safety belt use rate and reduce fatalities. Safety belt use is especially important for teens and young adults. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people age 15 to 34 in the United States. Even though most people buckle up, the majority of motor vehicle occupants killed in crashes last year were unrestrained.

Safety belt use saves lives and prevents injuries. Each percentage point increase in use saves about 270 additional lives across the nation. It is estimated that safety belts save the lives of more than 14,000 motorists each year and save about \$50 billion in medical care, lost productivity and other injury related costs nationwide.

"Everyone on the road is reminded to buckle up – every trip, every time – unless you want to risk a ticket, or worse, your life," said [insert SPOKESMAN'S NAME AND TITLE]. "Issuing tickets isn't fun, but it's better than pulling bodies from crashes. We will be showing zero tolerance for anyone not wearing a safety belt as a way to protect everyone from losing their lives in a crash."

For the past several years, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has helped states implement the *Click It or Ticket* program across the country, aiding law enforcement agencies in conducting intensive, high-publicity *Click It or Ticket* campaigns with increased enforcement of safety belt law. These efforts — coupled with paid advertising and the support of government agencies, local schools, community organizations and others — work to create dramatic increases in safety belt use and help defend us against one of the greatest threats to us all: traffic crashes.

The *Click It or Ticket* efforts work. Research shows the *Mobilization* campaign to be a key factor in raising safety belt use rates. In 2003, more states ran campaigns than ever before and use rates indicate that the increased effort to get the public to buckle up was a success – there was an unprecedented 4-point jump in safety belt use nationwide, from 75% in 2002 to 79% in 2003.

"The *Click It or Ticket* efforts help save lives," said NHTSA Administrator Jeffery Runge. "Through the combined efforts of law enforcement, advertising and community support, we help drive up safety belt use and make our nation's roads safer."

More than 12,000 law enforcement agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico will conduct safety belt checkpoints and other special law enforcement activities as part of the effort.

In [Insert STATE/LOCALITY], law enforcement officers will [insert SPECIFIC ABOUT ENFORCMENT EFFORTS]. Some [insert NUMBER OF AGENCIES] agencies and [insert NUMBER OF OFFICERS] will be involved in the stepped-up enforcement effort.

"High visibility enforcement saves lives," said [insert LOCAL SPOKESMAN]. "Our goal is make sure everyone on the road, whether passenger or driver, knows they are more at risk, not just of getting a ticket, but for suffering a serious injury or death, if they don't buckle up."