**2018 BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING**

**SAMPLE OP-ED**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]**

**CONTACT: [Name, Phone Number, E-mail Address]**

**Note: Before filling in the names of the organization and organization spokesperson, you MUST contact them for permission to use their names in this op-ed. Also, you must get their approval for the language of their quotations, and any changes or additions they may require. Only after this is done should you issue the press release.**

## Don’t let halloween night end in a nightmare:

## *Buzzed driving is drunk driving*

Ghouls and goblins galore, Halloween is a night of celebration for people of all ages. Whether young trick-or-treaters, or adult partygoers, Halloween is a time for friends and family to enjoy candy, costumes, and a night of make believe. Save the nightmares for the horror films: don’t engage in drunk driving. Always remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

Between 2012 and 2016, there were 168 vehicle occupants involved in drunk-driving crashes on Halloween night (6 p.m. October 31 – 5:59 a.m. November 1). In 2016, there were 13 vehicle occupants killed in drunk-driving crashes on Halloween night. There were zero pedestrians killed in drunk-driving crashes, which meant trick-or-treaters and other merry-makers were safer on the streets. This is a good trend. And this is why the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is working with **[Local Officials]** to spread the word about the dangers of drunk driving in an effort to rid our streets of drunk drivers. Even one drink can be one too many if it means getting behind the wheel of a vehicle. Remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

From 2012 to 2016, 44 percent of all people killed in motor vehicle crashes on Halloween night (6 p.m. October 31 – 5:59 a.m. November 1) were in crashes involving a drunk driver, according to NHTSA statistics. Children out trick-or-treating, and those accompanying them, are also at risk, as 14 percent of pedestrian fatalities on Halloween night (2012-2016) involved drunk drivers. Younger people are most at risk: The 21- to 34-year-old age group accounted for the most fatalities (46%) in drunk-driving crashes on Halloween night in 2016.

Choosing not to drink and drive should be easy. Drunk driving endangers the driver, other vehicle passengers, and other road users. Drunk driving can be financially costly, as well, resulting in jail time and the loss of a driver’s license. It can also cost up to $10,000 in higher insurance rates, attorney’s fees, court costs, car towing and repairs, and lost wages due to missing work. There are many resources to help you get home safely without needing to drive after drinking.

This Halloween, and every day, you can stay safe and protect yourself and others on the road by following these tips:

* Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you’ve had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride sharing service to get home safely.
* Download NHTSA’s SaferRide mobile app, available on Google Play for Android devices: (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nhtsa.SaferRide&hl=en>), and Apple’s iTunes Store for iOS devices: (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/saferride/id950774008?mt=8>). SaferRide allows users to call a taxi or a predetermined friend, and identifies the user’s location so he or she can be picked up.
* Use your community’s sober ride program **[Insert your local sober ride program specifics here]**.
* If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact **[Local Law Enforcement]**.
* Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

It’s a lot easier to enjoy the party when you’re not worrying about how you’re getting home. Remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

13486c-072618-v2