**CINCO DE MAYO 2017
SAMPLE OP ED**

**SOCIAL NORMING VERSION**

**Margaritas and Driving Don’t Mix on Cinco de Mayo**

***Remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving***

By **[Local Area Leader]**

Each year, Cinco de Mayo brings fiestas and salty margaritas, but too often these celebrations lead to drunk driving. With the excitement of Cinco de Mayo, partygoers can find themselves “buzzed” after having a margarita or two—and without a planned, sober ride home.

That’s why this Cinco de Mayo, **[State/Local Organization]** is working with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to reach all drivers with an important life-saving message and warning: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

Tragically, May 5th has become a deadly day each year due to the number of drunk drivers on the roadways. According to NHTSA, 40 people (31% of all crash fatalities during the holiday period) were killed in drunk-driving crashes across the nation during the Cinco de Mayo holiday period in 2015.

From 2011-2015, 270 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes during the Cinco de Mayo holiday period.

NHTSA and **[State/Local Organization]** are working to change the way people think about drinking and driving. The goal is to help everyone realize that if they’re buzzed, they should not be behind the wheel.

Buzzed driving puts you and others at risk of a crash, or worse—death. Even a small amount of alcohol consumption can lead to poor decision-making and impairment that prevents you from safely operating a vehicle. A variety of factors determine the effect alcohol has on your body, and it can vary from person to person. For many people, it doesn’t take much alcohol to become too impaired to drive.

If you plan on drinking this Cinco de Mayo, designate a sober driver *before* you start the party. One of the easiest ways to ensure you make it safely home is to plan your ride ahead of time. Call a taxi, a sober friend or family member, or **[insert your area’s shared ride specifics here]**.

Drinking after driving is deadly dangerous and never worth the risk. Not only could you seriously injure or kill yourself or someone else, but if you are convicted of drunk driving, you face significant legal and financial consequences that include jail time, the loss of your driver’s license, higher insurance rates, attorney fees, court costs, car towing and repairs, and lost wages due to time off from work. Also, there’s the embarrassment, humiliation, and consequences of telling your family, friends and employer of your arrest.

Drivers convicted of DUI make up lots of excuses for why they got behind the wheel after drinking, but the reality is they failed to plan ahead. If you wait until you’ve been drinking to plan your sober ride, it may already be too late.

Plan your sober ride home before the party begins this Cinco de Mayo.

Remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

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