**2018 RIDE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER**

**SAMPLE OP-ED**

**ENFORCEMENT VERSION**

**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.**

**Before You Start the Journey, Remember:**

***Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over*—Labor Day, and Every Day**

As summer winds down, the days shorten and riding season starts to decrease. Marked by the Labor Day holiday weekend, the end of summer brings about final pool parties and backyard barbecues. It also brings about that last, long summer ride, soaking up the feel of summer’s rays. You pull into a bar with your fellow riders, have a few drinks, and head to the bathroom to splash cool water on your face before you hop on your motorcycle and head home. Take a good look at that man in the mirror—are you really ready to hit the road after having a few drinks?

According to research from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2016, motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes were found to have the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers than any other vehicle types (25% for motorcycles, 21% for passenger cars, 20% for light trucks, and 2% for large trucks). Even though motorcycles account for only about 3 percent of registered vehicles on the road, motorcyclists are dramatically overrepresented in fatal crashes—especially those involving alcohol.

To help save lives and stop drunk riding, NHTSA is partnering with **[Local Law Enforcement Organization]** in the high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over*. The campaign runs from August 17 through September 3, 2018. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk riding, pulling over and arresting any motorcyclists caught drinking and riding. Increased State and national messages about the dangers of riding (and driving) impaired, coupled with enforcement and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk riding on our nation’s roadways.

“Unfortunately, the Labor Day holiday weekend can be a dangerous time for our community roads,” said **[Local Law Enforcement Officer]**. “We want to get the message out loud and clear: drunk driving and drunk riding are not tolerated. If we find you riding intoxicated, we will pull you over and arrest you, end of story. Drunk motorists are a danger to themselves and other road users, and we are showing zero tolerance for this selfish, illegal behavior.”

Think drunk riding won’t cost you? Think again. First and foremost, riding intoxicated can kill you, your passenger, or other road users. Because motorcycles are more difficult to spot, especially at night, they are already at an increased disadvantage. Intoxication affects other aspects of riding, too: Sadly, the more that motorcyclists drink, the less likely they are to wear their helmets. In 2016, the reported helmet use rate for alcohol-impaired motorcycle riders killed in traffic crashes was 50 percent, as compared to 65 percent for those with no alcohol consumed.

“Like seat belts in vehicles, helmeted motorcycle riding is the single-most important action you can take to stay safe while riding,” said **[Local Law Enforcement Officer]**. “Motorcycles do not have seat belts. There are no walls or air bags. There is nothing between you and the road, or you and another vehicle. If you plan to go out and have a drink, keep in mind your safety and the legalities of drinking and riding. Remember: *Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over*.”

This Labor Day weekend, **[Local Law Enforcement Organization]** and NHTSA urge you to make an alternate plan before you head out on your motorcycle for a night of drinking. If you plan on drinking at all, plan on not riding.

**[Local Law Enforcement Organization]** recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and motorcycle riding:

* Remember that it is never okay to drink and ride. Even if you’ve had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation 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 ride? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

Remember that drunk riding has financial implications, too. Besides the nearly $10,000 in legal fees, lost wages, and insurance hikes, you could face serious injury or death. Are the riders in your group comfortable with drunk riding? If you choose to set the example, you could help save a life. If you know you have a night of drinking ahead of you, plan for a safe, alternative ride home before you ever head out, and plan to have someone take you to get your bike in the morning. There are so many safe ways to get home; there is never an excuse for drinking and riding.

This Labor Day, and every day, the decision to not drink and ride should be an easy one. Drunk riding is never okay. Even one drink can be one too many. For more information about the *Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement campaign, please contact **[Local Organization Representative]** at **[phone or e-mail]**,or visit [www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov](https://www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov).