**2019 DRIVE 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 op-ed.**

**Party With A Plan This Labor Day Holiday**

***Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over***

The numbers are shocking: In 2017, one person died every 48 minutes in a drunk-driving crash in America. These deaths account for approximately one-third of all traffic deaths each year, with 10,874 deaths occurring in 2017, alone. Even with drunk driving being illegal in all 50 states and Washington, DC, the numbers remain similar year after year. Ultimately, drinking and driving is a choice, and it is a choice that puts all road users at risk.

For millions of Americans, the Labor Day holiday marks the end of summer, a time for families and friends to come together to celebrate the last warm days of the season before the long winter sets in. Unfortunately, it is also a time of year when drunk-driving fatalities increase. To help keep people safe on the streets and put an end to drunk driving, local law enforcement will be out in full force in support of the 2019 *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign. Between August 14 and September 2, 2019, law enforcement officers nationwide will team up with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to participate in high-visibility enforcement, pulling over and arresting drunk drivers.

During the 2017 Labor Day holiday period (6 p.m. September 1 – 5:59 a.m. September 5), there were 376 crash fatalities nationwide. Forty-four percent of those fatalities involved drivers who had been drinking (.01+ BAC). More than one-third (36%) of the fatalities involved drivers who were drunk (.08+ BAC), and more than one-fourth (26%) involved drivers who were driving with a BAC almost twice the legal limit (.15+ BAC). Among the drivers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes over the Labor Day holiday period in 2017, 42% of those drivers were drunk, with BACs of .08 or higher.

The decision to not drink and drive should never be a tough one. Drunk driving is illegal and can be deadly — to the driver, to his or her passengers, and to other road users. We will be out on high alert, seeking out drunk drivers during the holiday period, showing zero tolerance for anyone driving drunk. If we find you driving drunk, you will be arrested — no excuses. This news should not come as a shock; everyone knows it is against the law to drive impaired in every state and Washington, DC. Alcohol consumption lowers inhibitions, causing you to make bad decisions you would not otherwise make. Do not trust yourself when you drink.

The *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* national high-visibility enforcement campaign ends on September 2. However, our commitment to enforcing drunk-driving laws never ends. Drunk driving is never okay. If you are planning to drink, plan ahead for a sober ride home. Even one drink is one too many. Remember these tips for a safe night on the roads:

* 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 to get home safely.
* 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.

Ultimately, drunk driving is 100-percent preventable. Don’t make the choice to put yourself and others at risk.

For more information about the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign, visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/national-mobilization/peak-enforcement-kit>.

12965d-050117-v1a