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***This Labor Day, Remember: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over  
Together we can ENDUI***

**Oklahoma Highway Safety Office Supports Agencies Statewide  
In Its Goal to End Impaired Driving**

This Labor Day weekend, families and friends will be celebrating the end of the summer. Sadly, this festive time is a dangerous time for Oklahoma's roads, as many impaired drivers get behind the wheel after celebrating.

For this reason, the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office is partnering with local law enforcement agencies to stop impaired drivers and help save lives. The high-visibility enforcement campaign, ENDUI Oklahoma runs August 19-September 5, 2016 in support of the national *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for impaired driving. Increased state and national messaging about the dangers of driving impaired, coupled with sobriety checkpoints and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce impaired driving on our state's roads.

During the 2015 Labor Day holiday weekend, nine people died in eight fatal crashes. Six of the nine fatalities occurred in alcohol/drug-related crashes on Oklahoma roads (OHSO Crash Facts). According to NHSTA, on average, over 10,000 people died each year (2010 to 2014) in impaired-driving crashes nationwide.

Nationally, 40 percent of crash fatalities on Labor Day weekend in 2014 involved impaired drivers (with blood alcohol concentrations [BACs] of .08 or higher). And we're not just talking about a little bit of alcohol, either. More than a quarter (28%) of the crash fatalities that occurred on Labor Day weekend involved drivers with BACs of .15 or higher—almost twice the illegal limit.

“Impaired driving robs families of their dreams, their futures, their loved ones and for many their lives. The decision to get behind the wheel of a car while impaired affects everyone, said Oklahoma Highway Patrol Chief Ricky Adams. Impaired driving is still a massive problem across our state, with more than 100 Oklahomans dying in alcohol-related crashes each year (OHSO Crash Facts). We encourage the public to not only drive safely, but be on the lookout for others on the road who could be driving impaired,” he added. “It is your business. If you think you see an impaired driver, call us. It could be the call that saves someone you love.”

“There are people who like to pretend that certain laws don’t apply to them. But, just to be clear; in Oklahoma, for every person, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher,” said Chief Adams. During the enforcement period, there will be a special emphasis on impaired-driving enforcement. Local drivers should expect to see more patrol vehicles, sobriety checkpoints, and increased messaging about the dangers of impaired driving. “This is an unacceptable problem. Impaired driving is selfish and dangerous. We want to increase awareness with this campaign, but also see lasting results of decreased impaired driving.” he said.

“This is important to remember: make plans before you drink. After drinking is not the time to make a decision on how to get home.” said Toby Taylor, Director of the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office. “You may think you aren’t impaired, but law enforcement will know you are. Oklahoma statewide impaired driving ENDUI Teams are trained to detect and identify impaired drivers. They will spot you and arrest you.”

“Please, please: plan ahead before you go out,” said Taylor. “Designate a sober driver or call a cab. But whatever you do, do not drink and drive.” NHTSA has made it even easier to get home safely when you’ve been drinking, with the free SaferRide mobile app, available through iTunes and Google Play. The app allows you to call pre-selected contacts or a taxi, and also identifies your location so you can be picked up.

This August, and every day, remember: there is never an excuse to drink and drive. If you choose to break the law, Oklahoma Highway Patrol will see you before you see them. *Together we can ENDUI.*

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