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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gov. Beshear: Kentuckians Can Work Together to Save Lives on Roadways *Operation Crash Reduction runs Oct. 8-11*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 5, 2021) – Kentucky is promoting Operation Crash Reduction (OCR) to help drivers and passengers remember the importance of seat belt use and other safe driving practices.

Law enforcement will conduct a high-visibility enforcement campaign, emphasizing seat belt use, from Oct. 8 through Oct. 11 to save lives and prevent injuries due to traffic crashes.

“While drivers can never control who they share the road with, one thing within everyone’s control is the decision to buckle up and put the phone down every time you get in a vehicle to keep yourself safer no matter what,” said Gov. Andy Beshear.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet’s (KYTC) Office of Highway Safety (KOHS), state and local law enforcement and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are teaming up to support the operation.

“While we always encourage safe driving practices, this specialized campaign focuses on the importance of buckling up,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “If you are involved in a crash, properly fastened child seats and seat belts provide the best defense against injury or death.”

OCR is focused on NHTSA Region 3, consisting of Delaware, the District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia — a region that sees some of the nation’s highest numbers of traffic deaths.

From 2015 to 2019, October was the most likely month for fatal crashes to occur in these states, with 1,785 total fatal crashes. In these fatal crashes, more than 46 percent of occupant deaths in passenger vehicles, trucks and buses were unrestrained. During that same period in these states, more fatal crashes occurred on Columbus Day weekend (253) than during the holiday periods of Thanksgiving or Memorial Day.

“For several years now, we have had this troubling trend in this East Coast region,” said NHTSA Regional Administrator Stephanie Hancock. “We know that speed, distraction and impairment are the root causes of most of the crashes in these states. However, seat belt and child safety

seat use are your primary sources of protection in crashes caused by a speeding, impaired or distracted driver.”

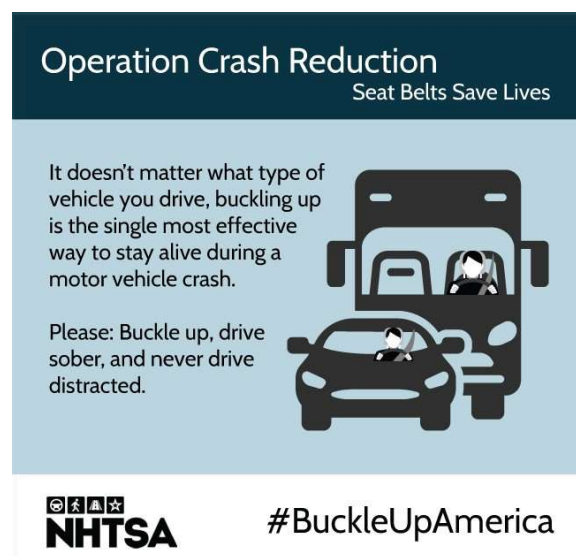
Last year there were 270 injuries and eight deaths on Kentucky roadways during the Oct. 9-12 holiday weekend. “That is why we are working with NHTSA and our state and local law enforcement partners to encourage motorists to buckle up and put the phone down,” said Secretary Gray.

According to NHTSA, when worn correctly, seat belts reduce the risk of fatalities by 45 percent for front-seat vehicle occupants and by 60 percent for pickup truck, SUV and minivan occupants.

“Seat belts save lives,” said Hancock. “Everyone — front seat and back, child and adult — should remember to buckle up.”

For more information on seat belts, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts>

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The poster features a dark teal header with the text "Operation Crash Reduction" in white, and "Seat Belts Save Lives" in a smaller font below it. The main body is light blue and contains two paragraphs of text on the left and a graphic of a car and a bus on the right. The car and bus are dark blue with white outlines, and each has a small figure of a person wearing a seat belt. The bottom of the poster is white and contains the NHTSA logo (a small icon of a car, a truck, and a star above the letters "NHTSA") and the hashtag "#BuckleUpAmerica".

Operation Crash Reduction
Seat Belts Save Lives

It doesn't matter what type of vehicle you drive, buckling up is the single most effective way to stay alive during a motor vehicle crash.

Please: Buckle up, drive sober, and never drive distracted.

NHTSA #BuckleUpAmerica