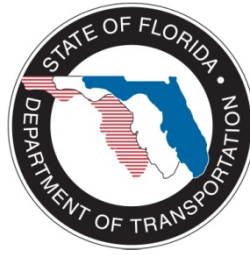


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ride Straight State to State: Three States, Two Wheels, One Cause *~Motorcycle Run kicks off Motorcycle Safety Month~*

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Safety Office announced today a partnership with the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety and the Alabama Office of Highway Safety to conduct ***Ride Straight State to State***, a public outreach program designed to urge motorcycle riders to never drink and ride. This program kicks off ***Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month*** during May 2010.

"By reaching out to our regional partners, we can reduce crashes in Florida and across the nation," said FDOT Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos. "Alcohol is a major factor causing motorcycle crashes, that's why we encourage motorcyclists to completely avoid alcohol consumption before they get on the road."

In 2008, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis reported that impaired motorcyclists in Florida with a blood alcohol concentration of .08+ accounted for 33 percent of motorcycle fatalities, while impaired motorcyclists with a blood alcohol concentration of .01+ accounted for 41 percent of motorcycle fatalities.

"Unfortunately, many riders think they can have a drink or two and still safely ride their motorcycles," said Marianne Trussell, FDOT Chief Safety Officer. "The reality is you are five times more likely to crash after consuming even one alcoholic beverage."

Florida is one of only a few states in the nation that has seen a reduction in the number of motorcyclist fatalities over the past two years. Continuing this trend is the top priority of Florida's Motorcycle Safety Coalition, a partnership between the Florida Departments of Transportation, Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and Health as well as rider groups, rider coaches, law enforcement, dealerships, safety councils, and the insurance industry.

On April 29, motorcyclists from Florida, Georgia and Alabama will participate in a motorcycle run to promote safe choices while on the road. At noon (Central Standard Time) that day, motorcyclists from Georgia and Alabama will ride to meet Florida motorcyclists at the Florida Welcome Center on U.S. 231, at the Alabama-Florida state line (just west of the Georgia-Alabama border).

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A welcoming committee consisting of Florida's Motorcycle Safety Coalition Members, the Florida Rider Training Program, Florida Highway Patrol, Community Traffic Safety Teams and local law enforcement agencies will greet motorcyclists as they enter Florida. Motorcyclists from all three states will then ride together to attend the Thunder Beach Motorcycle Rally in Panama City Beach.

The event is open to the public.

When: April 29, 2010 at 12 Noon (Central Standard Time)

Where: U.S. 231 Welcome Center, 5865 Highway 231, Campbellton, FL 32426

For more information, please visit www.ridesmartflorida.com or e-mail suggestions, comments and questions regarding the program to Trenda McPherson, trenda.mcpherson@dot.state.fl.us.

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