



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **It is Time for Proms and Graduating Parties and Summer Driving!**

TALLAHASSEE - The Florida Highway Patrol will be out in force during the 96-hour Memorial Day holiday weekend which begins on Friday, May 26, 2006 and extend through midnight, Monday, May 29, 2006. The Florida Highway Patrol will be participating in three distinct traffic enforcement operations during this period: *Operation C.A.R.E.* (a Combined Accident Reduction Effort involving all 50 state police/highway patrol organizations); *All-American Buckle Up Week* (May 22-29); and the highly publicized *Click It or Ticket* mobilization campaigns (May 14 - June 4). All three campaigns focus on saving lives, preventing injuries and reducing property damage associated with motor vehicle traffic crashes.

During last year's Memorial Day holiday period, 44 people were killed in 42 fatal traffic crashes; 36% of these fatal traffic crashes were alcohol-related; and 57% of those killed in vehicles normally equipped with safety belts were unrestrained.

"The Memorial Day holiday weekend traditionally signals the start of the summer driving period. It is also a time full with proms and graduation parties. In Florida, it is illegal for persons under the age of 21 to purchase and publicly possess alcoholic beverages. Moreover, it is against the law to drive under the influence of alcoholic beverages, any chemical or controlled substance, to the extent that the person's normal faculties are impaired," said Colonel Chris Knight, Director of the Florida Highway Patrol. The FHP, Knight added, has a zero tolerance policy in support of these laws."

All uniformed FHP personnel normally assigned to administrative duties in the office will be assisting regular troopers by patrolling interstates and other major state roads throughout the four-day holiday period. This strategy is intended to increase the Patrol's presence on major arteries throughout Florida in an effort to deter traffic violators, and also to provide enhanced service to motorists who break down while traveling or need other types of assistance.

Motorists are reminded to use their cellular phones wisely and safely. FHP urges all drivers to call \*FHP (\*347) to report aggressive and/or drunk drivers, or if they need assistance on the road. Motorists needing emergency medical services should dial 911.