



**TENNESSEE COMBINED MESSAGING
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
MORE COPS. MORE STOPS.
SAMPLE OP-ED (548 words)**

Note: Before filling in the names of the organization and organization spokesperson(s), you MUST contact them to obtain their permission to use their names in this press release. You must also get their permission for the language used in their quotes, and any changes or additions they may require must be made before distribution of the release.

***Watch Out: More Cops. More Stops. This Thanksgiving Season
State and Local Law Enforcement Cracking Down on
Traffic Safety Violations Across Tennessee to Help Save Lives***

Whether you live in Tennessee or are just passing through, drivers beware. **[Local Law Enforcement Organization]** is teaming up with law enforcement agencies across the state between now and the busy Thanksgiving travel weekend to crack down on traffic safety violations.

More Cops. More Stops. is the state's latest campaign to help save more lives on our roadways. **[Local Law Enforcement Organization]** will be out in force to remind all drivers and passengers to never drink and drive, always buckle up, obey the speed limit, and eliminate all distractions in the vehicle while driving.

Stopping and arresting alcohol-impaired drivers will be a top priority of the campaign. In 2009, nearly one-third of those killed in crashes on our Tennessee highways involved drivers or motorcycle operators with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or above at the time of the deadly crash. That is simply unacceptable.

Drunk driving is deadly and will not be tolerated. So be forewarned. If you drive drunk, you will be stopped and you will be arrested. No warnings. No excuses.

Seat belt use is the single most effective way to protect oneself in a deadly crash. Sixty-nine percent of 18-to 34 year old passenger vehicle occupants killed in Tennessee crashes during 2009 were NOT wearing their safety belts at the time of the crash. We can and must do better.

Speeding and distracted driving laws will also be strongly enforced. In 2009, 21 percent of the highway fatalities in Tennessee were from speeding-related crashes. Thirty-one percent of 18 to 34 year olds that were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in Tennessee involved a vehicle that was speeding at the time of the fatal crash.

Distracted driving is another growing and deadly epidemic claiming 5,474 lives and leading to 448,000 injuries nationally in 2009. So we will be reminding all drivers to put down the cell phone and to never text and drive.

Tennessee is teaming with the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on this important national demonstration project, as one of only two States, to test the effectiveness of a new combined high visibility enforcement campaign designed to reduce drunk driving, boost seat belt use, and crack down on speeding and distracted driving, particularly among young adult males. Research and fatal crash statistics show that young adult males are most likely to practice high risk behaviors while driving such as not wearing seat belts and/or drinking and driving.

Drive safely and obey all laws this Thanksgiving season. Because with *More Cops. More Stops.* we will be out in force cracking down on those who are breaking the law on our roadways to help prevent tragic crashes and save even more lives.

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