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CONTACT:

Jeff Salzgeber: jeffs@sherrymatthews.com, (512) 743-2659

END OF DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BRINGS DARKER DAYS AND DANGEROUS COMMUTES

Law Enforcement Out in Full Force Urging Drivers, Bicyclists and Pedestrians to be Alert

WASHINGTON, D.C. – D.C.-area transportation officials' *Street Smart* campaign launched a call to action for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians to turn up their caution this fall—and especially on November 1 — when they turn back clocks for the end of daylight saving time. Along with the start of the busy holiday season, the fall months bring darker commutes, more traffic, and an increase in crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists on area roadways.

To support the *Street Smart* campaign—launched by representatives from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia—law enforcement throughout the region, in an effort to increase awareness and save lives, are cracking down for the next several weeks on drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians who violate traffic safety laws. Drivers who fail to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and pedestrians who jaywalk can face fines up to \$500. In addition, drivers are subject to receiving points on their driver records.

In 2014, 72 pedestrians and three bicyclists died in crashes in the Washington metro region. November and December are of particular concern to safety advocates because they are the darkest months of the year. Nighttime hours are especially dangerous for pedestrians. In 2013, 72 percent of pedestrian fatalities in the U.S. occurred in the dark.

“With the sun setting earlier, many people are traveling during darker hours. In addition, as we head into the winter months, people often wear darker clothing, such as coats and jackets. That can make it harder for drivers to see people on foot and on bikes,” said Tim Lovain, First Vice Chair of the Transportation Planning Board and Alexandria Council Member. “With that in mind, it’s important to remind everyone—drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians—to be attentive, avoid distractions and follow traffic laws, especially at intersections.”

The *Street Smart* campaign encourages drivers to slow down and look twice for people at crosswalks. Officials also suggest that those on foot and on bicycles wear light colors or something reflective to be more visible, and to watch for turning vehicles at intersections.

Learn more about *Street Smart* at BeStreetSmart.net and follow the campaign on at twitter.com/COGStreetSmart

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The Council of Governments is an independent, nonprofit association where area leaders address regional issues affecting the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia.

Street Smart Safety Tips

(BeStreetSmart.net)

If you're driving . . .

- Look twice for people in crosswalks and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Be careful when passing stopped vehicles.
- Yield to pedestrians and cyclists at intersections when you're turning.
- Allow three feet when passing bicyclists.
- Look for cyclists and cars before you open your door.
- Slow down and obey the speed limit.
- Avoid using your cell phone while driving.

If you're walking . . .

- Cross the street at the corner and use marked crosswalks when they're available.
- Wait for the "Walk" signal to cross the street.
- Before crossing look left, right, and left again.
- Be seen! If you're walking after dark or in bad weather, make it easier for drivers to see you by wearing light clothing or something reflective.
- Don't text while you're crossing the street.
- If you're on an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution.

If you're biking . . .

- Obey all traffic signs and traffic lights.
- Ride in the direction of traffic, at least a car-door-width away from parked cars.
- Use hand signals so drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians know what you're going to do.
- Always wear a helmet.
- Use lights if you're riding in the dark.
- If you're on an off-street trail, obey all posted signage and approach intersections with caution.

Laws and regulations differ between jurisdictions. Visit BeStreetSmart.net for information on specific trail guidelines and regulations.