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For More Information: Jay Remy (503) 986-4180  
Anne Holder (503) 986-4195

## **Governor proclaims Transportation Safety Month**

Governor Kulongoski has proclaimed May "Transportation Safety Awareness Month" in Oregon. In his proclamation (see attached), the governor cites a number of ways in which ODOT, law enforcement and communities throughout the state contribute to a safe transportation system.

"The governor's proclamation helps us highlight the hard work that goes on every day of the year," said Troy Costales, administrator of the ODOT Transportation Safety Division. "Oregon has experienced a great reduction in traffic deaths and injuries during the past four years largely because of the efforts of our partners in law enforcement as well as citizen volunteers."

Among the safety-related activities slated for this month are:

- Child safety seat clinics
- Traffic safety talks at schools
- Safety fairs
- A major law enforcement blitz for seatbelts and child passenger safety
- Drugs, Drinking, Driving, Don't program for college and high school students
- Motorcycle Safety Awareness Day

So far this year, the traffic fatality count is down about 10 percent from the same time last year. As of April 21, the fatality count was at 109 for the year to date, compared to 121 for the same date in 2003.

"That is good news for now and we hope the trend continues," Costales said. "We are trying to avoid a repeat of last year when fatalities spiked from April through December."

Until April 1, 2003, the running total was 10 fatalities below projections. However, from April 1-Dec. 31 the total went to 50 above the projected number. That increase of 60 fatalities was like “10 months’ worth of fatalities in the last 9 months of the year,” Costales said.

Costales said driving under the influence, speeding and failure to wear seatbelts are the most common and most avoidable driver errors in serious crashes. He said a variety of activities throughout the year are targeted at changing those behaviors.

ODOT values all of the workers engaged in transportation occupations and their role in promoting safety. As Oregon moves into one of the heaviest highway construction seasons in history, contractors and ODOT employees are directed to put safety first while getting the highway work done.

###ODOT###

*Note: See attached proclamation.*

**PROCLAMATION**

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**STATE OF OREGON**

WHEREAS: The Oregon Department of Transportation serves Oregon citizens and visitors through efforts at reducing loss of life and instances of injury and property damage in all modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS: The Department, working with others, implements programs relating to safety belt use, speed control, courteous driving, alcohol and other-impaired driving, motorcycle, bicyclist, pedestrian safety, vehicle equipment, emergency medical and community traffic safety programs; and

WHEREAS: The Department enhances traffic safety through its DMV, including licensing all drivers; maintaining all driver records including convictions and collisions; identifying problem drivers through driver improvement, re-exam evaluation, and medical programs; and

WHEREAS: The Department promotes safe, efficient, and responsible commercial transportation through its Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Plan, including commercial vehicle safety inspections, compliance reviews, enforcement of hazardous materials regulations and multi-agency oversight and training; and

WHEREAS: The Department considers safety in all aspects of its design, construction and maintenance work and targets roadway work zone accidents through its Give 'Em a Brake campaign and special work zone enforcement with state and local police agencies; and

WHEREAS: The Department supports safety by helping to provide for safe operation of transit services by transportation providers for Oregon's elderly and disabled, and by rural and urban public transportation systems; and

WHEREAS: The Department promotes rail safety through its Operation Lifesaver rail and crossing safety program and the regulation of railroad safety;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor of the State of Oregon, hereby proclaim the month of May 2004 as

**Transportation Safety Awareness Month**

in Oregon and encourage all citizens to join in celebrating Oregon's commitment to transportation safety by buckling up every time they ride.

###ODOT###