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Click It Or Ticket Campaign To Begin

Beginning on Monday, May 21, and continuing through Sunday, June 3, drivers can expect increased police presence on city streets as the Liberal Police Department joins over 150 other law enforcement agencies in aggressively enforcing Kansas occupant restraint and other traffic laws as part the 2012 Kansas ***Click It or Ticket*** traffic enforcement campaign. This activity is supported by a grant the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT).

Expect strict enforcement of the Safety Belt Use and Child Passenger Safety Acts. Briefly, these require that all occupants must be appropriately restrained. Occupants, ages 14 and over, are cited individually. In the event that a passenger under the age of 14 is unrestrained the driver will be cited. Children under the age of four must be secured in an approved child safety seat. Children, ages four through seven, must be securely belted into an approved booster seat unless taller than 4 feet 9 inches o heavier than 80 pounds. Children, ages eight through 13 must be safety-belted. In addition, the act prohi persons under the age of 14 from riding in any part of a vehicle not intended for carrying passengers, su as a pickup bed.

The aim of *Click It or Ticket* is simple: to drastically reduce the number of preventable deaths an injuries that occur when unbelted drivers and passengers are involved in traffic crashes. According to KDOT's Traffic Safety section, over two-thirds of those killed in crashes are <u>not</u> belted in. Just as strik is the fact that about 89 percent of crash survivors who suffer no injuries at all <u>are</u> belted in. In other w an unrestrained occupant has only about an 11% chance of not being injured in a crash. And all for sim not taking two seconds to buckle up.

Kansas' adult seat belt compliance rate is 83% and ranges, by county, from 66 to 89 percent, wi higher rates generally associated with urban counties and lower rates generally associated with rural counties. Given that unrestrained vehicle occupants are much more likely to die in crashes than are tho who buckle in, it is no surprise that the lower safety restraint usage rate in rural areas is matched with a higher crash fatality rate. In fact, in Kansas, while only about one-third of all crashes occur on rural roadways, those roads see fully two-thirds of all fatal crashes. This is frequently due to vehicles in rura areas unintentionally leaving their driving lane and colliding with off-road obstacles, such as culverts, and/or rolling over and ejecting unbelted occupants. One of the grimmest duties of a police officer is to work a crash where an unrestrained occupant is either partially ejected, or completely ejected, and then crushed by the rolling vehicle. Urban motorists are more likely to be belted and less likely to leave the road. While seat belts will not always protect one from serious or fatal injury, nothing else within the vehicle is more effective.

Kansans like to see their state as one that protects children, yet in most Kansas counties children aged 5-14, are buckled in at lower rates than are adults and this is reflected in a statewide safety belt ra 74 percent for this age group. In some counties only slightly more than half of those 5-14 years are buc

in. Just as rural counties are generally associated with lower adult restraint rates, so they are also gener associated with lower child restraint rates – with some below 60% for this age group. However, even tl urban counties show less than 80% seatbelt compliance for these children.

According to Captain Jon Antrim, "Everyone knows there are seat belt laws and that seat belts a child safety seats save lives and reduce injury, as well as hold down health care costs for all of us. But many drivers play the odds and don't buckle up, or require their passengers to buckle up because, in th experience, a crash is unlikely. But, when a crash does happen – and it's generally within five miles fro home – the two seconds it takes to buckle up looks like a smart investment. I want drivers in the City o Liberal to remember that it's not only about **your** driving skill. It's also about the skills and habits of t drivers sharing the road with you. Disaster can strike the best driver out of nowhere."

"When you don't buckle up yourself or require that your passengers buckle up, you're making the decision for everyone in your vehicle that the drivers you meet are not going to be distracted by sleepiness, cell phone conversations, texting, changing radio stations, or kids fighting in the back seat. And you're assuming, for everyone, that no animal, roadway or mechanical problem will cause you to suddenly brake or veer out of your lane. I want people to know that the Liberal Police Department is committed to aggressively ticketing violators of seat belt and child safety laws, and all other traffic infractions that make our streets and highways unsafe"

LPD Press Release