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For Immediate Release:

**May 15, 2018**

Des Moines, Iowa

## Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving

The Fourth of July is a day of celebration in the United States. Families get together for picnics and fireworks which usually requires traveling either long or short distances. With increased road use and the possibility of increased alcohol consumption the risk of traffic crashes rise. An analysis by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety showed that on average, more people die in motor vehicle crashes on July Fourth than any other day of the year. The study found that motorcycles and alcohol were both big contributors.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that in 2016 (the latest year in which data is available) 188 people were killed in crashes involving at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. This is a 28 percent increase from 2015 when there were 146 fatalities. Nearly half of those who died were in a vehicle crash involving at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .15 or higher – almost twice the legal limit. In Iowa there were five fatalities in 2016 of which four were alcohol related. There were four fatalities in 2017 and one was alcohol related.

To combat the impaired driving problem over the Fourth of July holiday there will be increased law enforcement officers, on all of Iowa's roadways July 1 – 4, 2018 to spread the message that drunk driving will not be tolerated. It is NEVER okay to drive after drinking. Have a plan to get home safely if you will be drinking.

The Osage Police Department, Mitchell County Sheriff's Office, Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau want to remind you that the best way to protect yourself in any crash is to be wearing your seat belt. **BUCKLE UP EVERY TRIP EVERY TIME**

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