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NO MORE TRAFFIC DEATHS: EVERYONE HAS A STAKE IN THE ISSUE, AS FIRST-EVER REGIONAL VISION ZERO SUMMIT PROVES *Summit Will Be Held Today At The Milken Institute School of Public Health*

WASHINGTON, D. C. (Friday, March 31, 2017) — Grass roots groups and advocates for greater highway safety, representing motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, vulnerable highway users, and health and emergency medicine, and impaired driving organizations, are gathering today to forge a consensus and to fashion an ambitious action plan for reducing the overall number of traffic deaths and injuries to zero in the nation's capital within the next seven years, or by 2024.

Spearheaded by the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), the first-ever Washington Regional Vision Zero Summit will be held today, Friday, March 31, at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University. The event, slated to run from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., is officially hosted by the George Washington University Hospital and presented by AAA Mid-Atlantic.

Everyone has a stake in the issue. Traffic crashes are not “accidents.” Instead, they are preventable incidents that can be systematically addressed, notes AAA Mid-Atlantic. The goal of any driver is to avoid crashes and injuries. On average, 425 people lose their lives per year in traffic related crashes in the Washington metro area, as was the case in 2013, according to a report by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC). Vision Zero is an event designed to cultivate a public commitment to ending all traffic deaths and serious injuries.

“We’re passionate about advocating for better bicycling conditions and transportation choices for a healthier environment,” said Greg Billing, Executive Director of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA). “As such, we wanted to come together and offer a full-scale educational event aimed at making our streets and sidewalks safer this year. We are incredibly excited to announce we have a host of high-ranking individuals lined up to speak at the first-ever Vision Zero Summit in Washington, D.C.”

AAA Mid-Atlantic has sponsored Vision Zero Summits in several cities, including Philadelphia, because it is fully committed to the ambitious goal of eliminating deaths and injuries on our roadways. For more than 100 years, AAA has worked tirelessly to ensure that our roads are safe for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians.

“With respect to ourselves, we should never lose sight of the fact that we could be a motorist this morning, a pedestrian this afternoon and a bicyclist this evening,” said Tom Calcagni, Director of Public & Government Affairs at AAA Mid-Atlantic. “With respect to others and our duty to one another, we

want everyone using our roads to get where they are going safely, no matter which mode of transportation they choose.”

“This multi-jurisdictional traffic safety event is designed to bring together local elected officials, policymakers, agency staff, and advocates; brief them on traffic safety issues in the region; and encourage them to join the District of Columbia and formally commit to launching Vision Zero programs in their jurisdictions,” according to the Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT).

Vision Zero will cover data-driven initiative works that can design safer streets, effective traffic enforcement, and increased public education and outreach. The event will feature plenary sessions and a variety of breakout panel discussions.

Confirmed speakers include: Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, Dr. David Yang, Executive Director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, David Anspacher, Transportation Planner at the Montgomery County Planning Department, Emiko Atherton, Director of the National Complete Streets Coalition, Lucinda Babers, Director of the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles, Erv Beckert, Chief of the Highway and Bridge Design Division at Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation, and other keynoters, panelists and speakers.

“This event is designed to bring awareness to the Vision Zero initiative adopted by Mayor Muriel Bowser for effectively eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the greater Washington, D.C. region by 2024,” said Billing.

“The Vision Zero Initiative is proof positive the Bowser administration is making safety a local priority, and an integral part of transportation planning,” said Calcagni. “Changing the culture of complacency as it relates to lives lost on District roadways, and the nation’s roads, should be a guiding principle for all transportation-related discussions going forward. Focusing planning and resources on safety improvements will not only save lives and prevent injuries, but can also reduce congestion.”

The venue for today’s Vision Zero Summit is the Milken Institute School of Public Health at George Washington University, located at 950 New Hampshire Avenue NW. For more information, or to register today, visit: <http://www.waba.org/vision-zero-summit/>.



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