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Working Together to Stop Distracted Driving

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San Francisco, CA-April is recognized as National Distracted Driving Awareness Month. In California, the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), the San Francisco Police Department, CHP, local law enforcement, and community partners throughout the state are working together to make the roads safer by highlighting the dangers of being distracted while driving, especially by cell phones.

“Law enforcement would rather see everyone off their cell phones than hand out a lot of tickets,” said Rhonda Craft, Director of the Office of Traffic Safety. “Take care of calling, texting, setting your GPS and everything else before you hit the street.”

Lawmakers agree that distracted driving continues to be a growing problem among California’s motorists. Assembly Bill 1785 went into effect on January 1, requiring all drivers in California to keep their cell phone out of their hands while operating a motor vehicle. Under the new law, a driver may activate or deactivate a feature or function of the cell phone or wireless communication device by swiping or tapping its screen only if it is properly mounted or not being held in a driver’s hand. Specific information on the new law can be found at www.ots.ca.gov.

The Office of Traffic Safety will begin a new public awareness campaign throughout the state in April emphasizing how the new law makes virtually all hand-held cell phone activity illegal – talking, texting, and using apps. The campaign aims to end

distracted driving through education and raise awareness about the associated dangers. The goal is to change motorist behaviors and save lives, not just in the month of April , but year - round. This campaign is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

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