



Paul A. Pride  
Colonel

Ohio State Highway Patrol and Ohio Turnpike

**\*\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\*\***



Randy Cole  
Executive Director

**For Immediate Release:**

**Ohio Turnpike and State Patrol to crack down on high-risk driving behaviors**

*"I-80/I-35 Challenge" this weekend takes place in 16 states including across the Ohio Turnpike*

(BEREA Aug. 28, 2015) – The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) and the Ohio Turnpike are teaming up this weekend to join a major traffic safety initiative formed by the Iowa State Patrol and supported by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and 16 state patrol agencies with responsibilities along I-80 and I-35.

From Texas to Minnesota, New Jersey to California, motorists travelling on I-80 and I-35 this weekend will notice state troopers out in full force. The 16 state border-to-border traffic safety initiative includes a focus on the 241-mile Ohio Turnpike. This initiative is aimed at reducing serious injury and fatal crashes, as well as apprehending drivers who use the interstate system for criminal activity. The challenge will include the utilization of high visibility enforcement patrols from Aug. 28 through Aug. 30.

"Our message is simple. Be Smart. Drive Safe. If you do those two things on the Ohio Turnpike this weekend you won't get pulled over by our friends at the Ohio State Highway Patrol," said Randy Cole, Executive Director of the Ohio Turnpike. "And more importantly, you won't become a statistic on our traffic crash summary report."

"The ultimate goal of this effort is to have zero fatalities," said Staff Lt. William Weirtz, OSHP's Ohio Turnpike Liaison. "We're encouraging motorists to obey the speed limit, especially in work zones. Don't text and drive, drive sober, and buckle up," he added.

The Ohio Turnpike has traditionally ranked as one of the safest roads in the nation, with a relatively low fatal crash ratio under 1.0 since 1981. Yet this year has been a challenging one, according to the Commission because there have already been 10 fatalities on the Ohio Turnpike and there are four months remaining in 2015. By comparison, there were nine fatalities in all of 2014.

Since 2010, OSHP Troopers have cited close to 10,000 drivers on all of Ohio's highways for failing to move over. In fact, more Move Over citations were written on the Ohio Turnpike than any other Ohio roadway, 1,697 or 18 percent. The Patrol also issued 4,140 citations for ALL violations to drivers in Ohio Turnpike work zones in 2014. Ohio's "Move Over, Slow Down" law requires motorists to shift over one lane – or slow down if changing lanes is not possible – when passing any vehicle with flashing lights on the side of the road.

"Our top priority is to provide a safe road for all travelers 24 hours a day," said Cole. "That means our customers, our employees and our partners."

**For more information please contact:**

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**Ohio Turnpike Traffic Crashes by Severity  
1/1/2014 - 8/26/2015**

<b>Crash Severity</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015 YTD</b>
Fatal	9	10
Injury	467	298
Property Damage Only	2,165	1,395
Total	2,641	1,703

**Ohio Turnpike Enforcement Activity  
1/1/2014 - 8/26/2015**

	<b>Enforcement Contacts</b>	<b>Seat Belt Violations</b>	<b>OVI Arrests</b>	<b>Speeding Violations</b>	<b>Driving Under Suspension Violations</b>
<b>2014</b>	40,945	1,960	165	34,191	566
<b>2015 YTD</b>	23,260	1,150	99	18,780	373