



## *News from the Ohio Turnpike*

682 Prospect Street, Berea, Ohio 44017-2799

440.971-2066

[www.ohioturnpike.org](http://www.ohioturnpike.org)

---

**For Immediate Release:**

### **Ohio Turnpike announces partnership to promote safe driving habits**

*“What Message are You Sending” video campaign aims to curb distracted driving*

**BEREA (Nov. 27, 2019)** – The Ohio Turnpike today announced a partnership with the Indiana Toll Road and the Pennsylvania Turnpike to promote safe driving habits. The three agencies are jointly launching a new public education campaign focused on addressing the consequences associated with distracted driving.

The “What Message Are You Sending?” video campaign showcases the importance of avoiding poor decisions behind the wheel and setting a good example for children and others close to us.

While distracted driving can take many forms, the most common example typically involves a motorist attempting to use their cell phone to text, make a call or surf the internet while driving.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates over 3,000 people were killed by distracted driving in the United States in 2017. The challenging winter weather driving conditions in Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania further exacerbate the risks associated with distracted driving for motorists traveling in the Midwest.

Ferzan M. Ahmed, P.E., Executive Director of the Ohio Turnpike, says that raising awareness about the dangers of distracted driving and promoting safe driving habits will play an important role in keeping travelers and employees safe.

“Safety is our top priority and with our partner agencies in Indiana and Pennsylvania we will promote safe driving behaviors across the broader turnpike corridor,” said Ahmed. “As seen in the video, adults who stay focused on the driving task set a great example for family members.”

With millions of customers traveling across these facilities each year, combined with a social media reach of over 30,000 followers, the campaign is expected to have a large impact across all three roads.

This commitment to safety will continue in 2020. The agencies plan to continue developing awareness campaigns to combat distracted driving, and new videos in the “What Message Are You Sending?” campaign are already in development.

Also in 2020, the Ohio Turnpike will announce its 3rd annual “W82TXT” Teen Video Contest.

-more-

Students in grades 9-12 will be able to encourage their peers to drive safely and win some great prizes by producing and submitting a 6-60 second video. High schoolers can have fun, help spread awareness about the dangers of distracted driving and compete for great prizes like a GoPro, Apple iPad and a \$250 Amazon Gift Card. In addition to these great prizes, the Ohio Turnpike will also donate \$500 to the grand prize winner's booster club of choice.

###

**For more information contact:**

Brian Newbacher, Public Information Officer, 440-971-2066, 440-821-3399 (mobile)

[brian.newbacher@ohioturnpike.org](mailto:brian.newbacher@ohioturnpike.org).

