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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 22, 2010):
California Teen Safe Driving Week

Sacramento, CA (March 22, 2010) – Impact Teen Drivers worked with the California Legislature, Senator Alan Lowenthal, and Assemblymember Cathleen Galgiani to declare this week, March 21-27, “California Teen Safe Driving Week.” California Teen Safe Driving week is designed to raise awareness that reckless and distracted driving is the number one killer of teens in America, and promote the message of safe driving to California teens. Impact Teen Drivers, in partnership with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), is holding conferences statewide this week announcing a new partnership with the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and RADD® (the Entertainment Industry's Voice for Road Safety) to spread the message to teens about the dangers of reckless and distracted driving.

Impact Teen Drivers will be joined by leadership from the CHP, OTS, California Teachers Association (CTA), California Casualty, and the State Superintendent of Education, Jack O’Connell, along with families and friends of those who have died in what has become the NUMBER ONE KILLER OF TEENS in America—Distracted Driving.

“It is crucial that we educate teens and empower them to promote the safe driving message in order to have a fundamental and sustained behavior shift. This isn’t about bad kids doing bad things, but good kids making poor choices. One poor choice can alter or end their lives and the lives of those they care about,” said Dr. Kelly Browning, Executive Director of Impact Teen Drivers.

Impact Teen Drivers will be launching a new component to their Create Real Impact contests, which are contests where teens are challenged to create peer-to-peer teen safe driving messaging through videos, music, artwork, and essays. This new component of the Create Real Impact contest is aimed at providing a possible solution to the texting while driving problem. The name of the the contest is “Star Sixty Five (*65) to Stay Alive” and is the brain child of the non-profit and teen safe driving advocacy group Impact Teen Drivers.

The basic idea behind the contest is to offer a substantial prize for the development of an application for mobile devices (Droid, iPhone, etc) that will allow users to punch *-6-5 into their phone before entering their vehicle which will cause all calls to go to voicemail, and all text messages will generate a standard text message response explaining that the individual is currently driving and unable to respond, but will return their call when they arrive at their

destination safely. “What we are trying to do is change the culture by empowering teens and developing the tools that allow them to make good decisions behind the wheel while meeting their communication needs in a safe way,” said Dr. Browning.

“I would love to say that one of the four major wireless carriers is supporting our idea for *65 To-Stay-Alive feature on cell phones, but that is not the case at this point. We are still reaching out to wireless companies and trying to get them on board,” said Jon Hamm, President of Impact Teen Drivers and CEO for the California Association of Highway Patrol.

The *65 To Stay Alive contest will be announced and explained in further detail during the Teen Safe Driving Week press conference on March 22nd.

About Impact Teen Drivers

Since its creation in 2007, Impact Teen Drivers has been planning, developing, and delivering awareness and educational materials on teen safe driving. Started as a partnership between the California Highway Patrol and the California Teachers Association with funding from insurance giant California Casualty, Impact is actively engaging teenagers with their message of the dangers of reckless and distracted driving.

Impact reaches teens, parents, and teachers with the message of teen safe driving through their curriculum, which is in high schools across the United States; online through their web portals impactteendrivers.org, whatslethal.com, and createrealimpact.com; and with an extensive social media presence.

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