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VIRGINIA STATE POLICE UNVEIL SECOND “MOVE OVER” PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT AT STATE FAIR

PSA Recorded By First Trooper Injured In 2008

RICHMOND – Those heading to the 2008 State Fair of Virginia will have an opportunity to view Virginia State Police’s newest “Move Over” public service announcement (PSA). Fairgoers are invited to visit the Department’s exhibit set up in the Technology Building from Sept. 25 through Oct. 5. This year’s State Police booth features a “Move Over” display, two Virginia State Police vehicles, access to Virginia’s Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry, Virginia’s Highway Safety Challenge and free gunlocks.

The radio PSA was recorded this summer by Trooper Kris S. Chapman who was severely injured by a drunk driver Feb. 1, 2008. After stopping a vehicle off the southbound lanes of I-81 in Smyth County, Trooper Chapman was sitting in his patrol car finishing up the traffic stop when a pick-up truck crashed into his marked cruiser. Seven months later, the 30-year-old trooper is still recuperating from his injuries. He was the first of eight troopers struck statewide this year while working on the side of an interstate.

“We are noticing more motorists complying with Virginia’s ‘Move Over’ law when passing emergency personnel on the side of the road, and we thank them for making that effort,” said Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Virginia State Police Superintendent. “However, our Department has still had a trooper hit in every major region of the Commonwealth since February. How many more ‘near misses’ or serious injuries to our emergency services personnel will it take before all drivers pay attention to public safety professionals working on the side of the road?”

Less than two weeks ago, Trooper M.S. Walden became the eighth trooper struck by a passing motorist. He was stopped out with a violator in the eastbound shoulder of I-264 in Virginia Beach on Sunday, Sept. 14, 2008.

For the past year, the Department of State Police has raised awareness about the “Move Over” law through safety presentations, press conferences, and a statewide video PSA airing on the Department’s website. In addition, the Virginia Department of Transportation has erected six “Move Over” highway signs. The last signage was posted on I-95 northbound in Greensville County.

Virginia’s Move Over law requires drivers to change to another travel lane or to slow down and cautiously pass all emergency personnel stopped on the side of the road. The law carries a penalty of up to a \$2,500 fine and/or 12 months in jail.

For more information on the law and to view the latest public service announcement featuring Trooper Chapman, visit the state police Website at <http://www.vsp.virginia.gov>.



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