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## **EMBARGOED**

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### **SOUTH DAKOTA PROGRAM TO REDUCE ROADWAY DEPARTURE CRASHES IN WINTER WEATHER WINS NATIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY AWARD**

WASHINGTON, DC -- The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) was honored today in a ceremony on Capitol Hill with a National Roadway Safety Award for the success of its “High Friction Surface Treatment” (HFST) program to address road departure crashes in winter weather.

“Today we honor seven projects with innovative solutions for reducing crashes and saving lives,” said Federal Highway Administration Executive Director Tom Everett. “We commend South Dakota and this year’s other winners for their success not only in saving lives on our nation’s roads, but also for maximizing the cost effectiveness of federal, state, and local funds that were used.”

The National Roadway Safety Awards are a biennial awards program sponsored jointly by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF). The awards recognize roadway safety achievements that move the United States toward zero deaths and serious injuries on the nation’s roadways.

South Dakota’s HFST program involved installations in 15 locations in the Blacks Hills area of the state, which together averaged 21 winter weather-related crashes each year. In the two winters following the installations, there was a total crash reduction of 78%.

Motor Vehicle crashes are among the nation’s leading killers, costing more than 37,000 deaths and nearly 2.7 million injuries in 2017, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

“While our roads and vehicles have gotten safer over the years, clearly motor vehicle crashes still take a tremendous toll,” said Roadway Safety Foundation Executive Director Greg Cohen.

“Our Roadway Safety Awards honor those who successfully identified innovative opportunities for improvement in their systems, as the South Dakota team did, and applied the latest research and technology to implement effective and cost-efficient fixes,” Cohen continued. “We congratulate and salute our winners and urge DOTs across the nation to look at these innovative solutions and replicate them wherever possible.”

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The National Roadway Safety Award projects were evaluated on three criteria: Effectiveness, Innovation, and Efficient Use of Resources. The program honors outstanding projects involving infrastructure, operational or program-related innovations. The seven winners were selected from a nationwide pool of applicants.

The other awardees were: Arizona for its Wrong-Way-Driving (WWD) detection program that detects and then alerts drivers and police when a WWD vehicle is detected; Florida for two programs, a pedestrian and bicycle safety initiative and for creating a process that dramatically decreased the time to design and install safety fixes; Missouri for a program to install median U-turns; and Virginia for two programs, one to better manage guardrails in critical areas and the other for development of its innovative statewide pedestrian safety plan.

Winners were selected by an expert panel of judges from a variety of disciplines. This year's judges included: Bruce Hamilton, Managing Director, Roadway Safety Foundation; Ivan Horodyskyj, NOVA district engineer, Virginia Department of Transportation; Bernardo Kleiner, senior program officer/transportation safety specialist, Transportation Research Board; Norah Ocel, acting team leader—safety operations, FHWA; Brian Roberts, principal, BCR Consulting, LLC; Dr. Marie B. Walsh, director, Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Terecia W. Wilson, Institute for Global Road Safety and Security, Clemson University.

For complete details on each of the winners, and for more information on the national awards program, visit <http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadwaysafetyawards/>.

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*The Roadway Safety Foundation is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization. Our mission is to reduce the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities through improvements to roadway systems and their environment.*

