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For Release Wednesday, October 23, 2019

TWO VIRGINIA HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS HONORED WITH NATIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY AWARDS

WASHINGTON, DC – Virginia’s Department of Transportation (VDOT) was honored today in a ceremony on Capitol Hill with two National Roadway Safety Awards for its “Strategic Guardrail Management Program” and its statewide “Pedestrian Safety Action Plan.”

“Today we honor seven projects with innovative solutions for reducing crashes and saving lives,” said Federal Highway Administration Executive Director Tom Everett. “We commend Virginia 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.

Virginia’s “Strategic Guardrail Management Program” improved the state’s investment on its guardrails by improving hundreds of the lowest functioning guardrail terminals at the highest risk locations across the state, thus maximizing their safety investment and better protecting the safety of motorists in Virginia.

The state’s “Pedestrian Safety Action Plan” provided a successful statewide strategy for identifying high risk areas for pedestrians and then quickly funding and installing safety improvements at those locations.

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. “Unfortunately, deficiencies in our roadway environments still contribute to nearly one-third of all crashes, so making improvements to our roadway infrastructure is a critical part of reducing these devastating crashes.

“Our Roadway Safety Awards honor those who successfully identified dangerous issues in their systems, as the VDOT teams did, and applied the latest research and technology to implement effective and cost-efficient fixes. We congratulate and salute our winners and urge DOT’s across the nation to look at these innovative solutions and replicate them wherever possible.”

Roadway Safety Awards 2-2-2

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 to dramatically decrease the time to design and install safety fixes; Missouri for a program to install median U-turns; and South Dakota for its high friction surface treatments to address road departure crashes in winter weather.

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 traffic 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.

