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**VISION ZERO: WITH WARM WEEKEND WEATHER IN THE FORECAST, MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES NEW MOTORCYCLE-FOCUSED SAFETY EFFORTS**

*NYPD's "Warm Weather Weekends" education and enforcement will again be in effect this weekend; Data show strong correlation between rising temperatures and a springtime surge in traffic crashes –serious motorcyclist injuries/fatalities on warm weekends increase by 88 percent*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that with warm weather in the weekend forecast, the NYPD and the DOT would continue their new Vision Zero safety campaign, "Warm Weather Weekends." The new effort is aimed especially at motorcyclists, whom crash data indicate are a far higher crash risk on warmer spring weekends.

"This weekend and all weekends this spring, we need to keep our Vision Zero focus on safety, particularly among motorcyclists," said **Mayor de Blasio**. "On warm weekends, we have seen dangerous driving increase. So we are telling both drivers and motorcyclists: when and if the sun comes out this weekend, there will still be absolutely no excuse for dangerous driving. The NYPD will be out in force to ensure you do not travel at speeds that endanger you and your fellow New Yorkers."

City officials specifically offered data on the increased dangers of motorcycle riding on warmer spring weekends, and DOT also offered helpful tips to both motorcyclists and drivers.

**Motorcycle Dangers:** Motorcyclists are over-represented among traffic fatalities in New York City. Motorcycles comprise only 2 percent of registered vehicles in New York City, yet from 2010-14, motorcyclists accounted for 14 percent of traffic fatalities in New York City. In that same period, fatalities among motorcyclists also skewed far younger (56 percent of deaths were under 35 years old) and more male (98 percent of fatalities) than any other mode of travel.

**Warm Weather Weekends:** The danger in the spring is most pronounced for motor vehicle occupants and motorcyclists on warm weather Saturdays and Sundays. On spring weekends when high temperatures exceed 60 degrees, the rate for drivers and car occupants killed or seriously injured (KSI) is 41 percent higher than the winter weekend rate. For motorcyclists, the KSI danger on weekends rises by 88 percent.

Ron Whittaker, Director of Vision Zero Operations in DOT's Education and Outreach division and a Harley-Davidson rider, offered riders and drivers the following safety tips for motorcycling season.

### **FOR MOTORCYCLISTS**

- Ensure Proper Licensure and Registration – Motorcyclists must carry a Class M or Class MJ New York State driver's license. The most common license, the Class D passenger vehicle license, is not sufficient to legally operate a motorcycle. Riders also need to verify that their bike is properly registered and insured. Improper documentation can lead to seizure of the motorcycle by the NYPD.
- Stay off the White Line – Passing between vehicles is risky, especially this time of year when cars are not used to seeing motorcyclists out on the highways. Stay in middle of travel lane, and be predictable when passing.
- Pass on the Driver's Side – You are much more visible in the driver's side mirror than the passenger's side. Make sure you are seen.
- Get Practice Before Riding the Open Road – As motorcycling season begins, you should not expect to be at 100%, and should take your time getting on the open road. Take your motorcycle to a parking lot or out-of-the-way street to gradually get your bike under you again. If possible, take a refresher class.
- Watch the Tires for Turns – The car in front or you may turn unexpectedly. Look to their front tires for sudden turns and keep a safe distance. Expect the unexpected.

### **FOR DRIVERS**

- Be Mindful of Motorcyclists -- Especially on warm weather weekends when the number of bikers on the road increase, car drivers should always check their mirrors, look twice for motorcycles and deliberately use direction signals, giving ample time before making turns.

"It is imperative that motorcyclists understand that the exposed nature of a motorcycle leaves him or her particularly vulnerable to serious injury or death," said **Chief Thomas M. Chan, the NYPD's Chief of Transportation**. "The chances of sustaining such injuries are substantially increased when coupled with dangerous or inattentive driving behavior, either by the motorcyclist or another vehicle operator. The Police Department reminds motorcyclists to operate in a safe manner, be alert to all vehicles operating around them, and to be equipped with all the required safety equipment. Additionally, car and truck operators are reminded to be watchful for motorcyclists in their blind spots. Please also keep in mind that speeding is another leading cause of motorcycle collisions, therefore the NYPD will continue its speeding enforcement. Our enforcement efforts will include seizing the motorcycle if necessary."

"We are grateful that we may see some warm weather for Mother's Day weekend, but we want to once again remind drivers and motorcyclists of the need to stay vigilant about safety," said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. "Our message to New Yorkers remains simple: go out and play this weekend and all spring. However, if you are out riding a motorcycle, please follow our safety educator Ron Whittaker's sage tips for safe riding. You will not only make your mother happy, you could even save a life -- including your own."

"It's getting warmer and motorcycles are out!" said **Michael "Rock" Whetstone, President of American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE) of NY 5 Boroughs**

**Chapter.** “Motorcyclists are nearly 5 times more likely to be injured and 29 times more likely to be killed in a crash than car or truck occupants are. So Look Twice for Motorcycles...and save a life!”

Last year was the fourth consecutive year of declining traffic deaths under Vision Zero, with the fewest-ever overall traffic fatalities citywide, driven by a 28 percent one-year decline in pedestrian fatalities. As part of the initiative, DOT implemented its most aggressive street redesign safety program, with increased investment in street redesign and traffic-calming measures citywide. Unfortunately, even with historic fatality declines, 2017 was marked by increases in both motorcyclist and motor vehicle fatalities – trends that Warm Weather Weekends is designed to address.

For more information about the de Blasio Administration’s Vision Zero initiative, please see [www.nyc.gov/visionzero](http://www.nyc.gov/visionzero).