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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUTNAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES SAFE CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION

The Putnam County Sheriff's Office is partnering with the Tennessee Highway Safety Office (THSO) for its annual Seatbelts Are For Everyone (SAFE) campaign. This statewide initiative is designed to increase seatbelt usage and child passenger safety restraint usage through the implementation of occupant-protection programs, public events, and checkpoints throughout local communities across Tennessee. The SAFE campaign begins February 1, 2017, and concludes on August 1, 2017.

"We are committed to the safety and security of our citizens, and we want to do our part to encourage safe driving in Putnam County," said Sheriff Eddie Farris.

2017 will be the fourth year that the THSO has sponsored the SAFE campaign. Last year yielded the following results:

- 1,717 child restraint violations
- 21,562 seat belt citations
- 723 other seat belt enforcement activities

"In 2015, Tennessee's average seatbelt usage rate was 86.23%," said THSO Director Vic Donoho. "Last year, we soared to 88.95%. Through increased education, enforcement, and community involvement, we're striving for ninety percent or higher."

This year, participating agencies will pay special attention to nighttime seatbelt enforcement. Tennessee has seen a disproportionate percentage of unrestrained fatalities between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 5:59

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a.m. Historically, approximately fifty percent of Tennessee's traffic fatalities are unbelted. That percentage increases to nearly sixty when nighttime crashes are examined.

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