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Media Contact: Scott Ishikawa
State Department of Transportation
Tel: (808) 587-2160 / Fax: (808) 587-2313
E-mail: scott.ishikawa@hawaii.gov

Diane Peters-Nguyen
The Limtiaco Company
Tel: (808) 535-9099 / Fax: (808) 535-9091
E-mail: Diane@TheLimtiacoCompany.com

Hawaii State Dept of Transportation to Expand Pedestrian Safety Campaign

- Walk Wise Hawai`i to include Neighbor Islands, All Ages -

HONOLULU, Hawaii (April 14, 2005)—The Hawai`i State Department of Transportation (**HDOT**) is expanding its pedestrian safety education campaign. The expanded campaign, *Walk Wise Hawai`i*, will include the Neighbor Islands and all age brackets.

Walk Wise Hawai`i will officially kick-off in Hawai`i, Kauai and Maui counties on April 30 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. with on-site radio promotions at the following locations:

- **Hilo, Hawai`i** – KAPA/KKBG/Da Beat will be near the Prince Kuhio Plaza.
- **Lihue, Kauai** – KITH/KTOH will be near the Kukui Grove Shopping Center.
- **Kahului, Maui** – KPOA will be at Queen Ka`ahumanu Center.

Station disk jockeys at the live remote events will be on air, touting the program and giving away promotional items. Similarly, **HDOT** community volunteers will be distributing educational materials and pedestrian safety lights donated by the **City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services** and promotional materials contributed by **AAA Hawai`i**.

In a show of support for the campaign, Neighbor Island Mayors Harry Kim, Brian Baptiste and Alan Arakawa have all proclaimed April 29 to May 5 “Pedestrian Safety Week” in their respective counties. Lt. Governor James “Duke” Aiona, Jr. is expected to proclaim the month of May “Traffic Safety Month in Hawai`i.”

Rodney Haraga, the State Department of Transportation director, believes behavior change is the key to reducing pedestrian fatalities. “Drivers and pedestrians must adopt safer behaviors,” said Haraga. “In nearly a quarter of pedestrian fatalities last year the person was in a crosswalk. We need drivers to respect pedestrian’s right of way, especially when they are in a crosswalk,” he said.

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The decision to expand the program was based largely on the continuing need for pedestrian safety education and builds upon the successful first year efforts of *Walk Wise Kupuna*, which targeted only Oahu seniors. The program has been commended regionally, cited as a model by the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO). Locally, Governor Linda Lingle acknowledged the need for the program in her State of the State address last year.

HDOT has successfully partnered with the **City Department of Transportation Services** and the **Honolulu Police Department (HPD)** to combine innovative outreach techniques with traditional techniques to reach both seniors (pedestrians) and drivers. Through the program **HPD** has delivered pedestrian safety presentations to over 6,000 seniors; partnerships were developed with Neighbor Island safety organizations and key businesses to expand reach; local churches were provided program information and fliers; and *Drive Wise* presentations reached members of organizations and other instrumental groups.

The TV public service announcement developed for the campaign, featuring a young girl remembering her grandmother, aired broadly on all major networks and cable stations and a new major media buy by **HDOT** will expand airing of the spot. Editorial coverage garnered has been extensive with dozens of TV and print stories for a total of over 1.5 million impressions through the TV and print stories.

In recent years Hawai'i has had among the highest pedestrian fatality rates in the nation.

For more information on *Walk Wise Hawai'i*, visit www.walkwisekupuna.org.

The **Hawaii State Department of Transportation (HDOT)** is dedicated to providing a safe, efficient, accessible, and inter-modal transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, and enhances and/or preserves economic prosperity and the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i. Formed shortly after statehood in 1959, the Department has three divisions, Airports, Harbors and Highways.

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