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CONTACT: Cathy Gillen
cell (443) 463-4449
cathy@thegillengroup.com

Michigan Department of Transportation Rumble Strip Initiative Honored with a National Roadway Safety Award

(Washington, DC) -- During a national awards ceremony on Capitol Hill, the Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today honored the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for its efforts to reduce run-off-the-road and fatal crashes caused by lane departure. MDOT's initiative was one of 10 recognized with a 2015 National Roadway Safety Award.

When looking at crash data from 2004 to 2007, MDOT determined that lane departure had contributed to nearly half of their fatal crashes. To address this concern, they embarked on a statewide effort to install rumble strips on all non-freeway high-speed rural roads managed by MDOT from 2008 to 2010. Crashes were reduced by 47 percent and fatal crashes by 51 percent when comparing three years of crash data following the installation to the three years before the rumble strips were installed.

"More than 32,000 people died in traffic crashes in 2013 and millions of individuals suffered injuries," said Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau. "Innovative roadway safety programs are a critical part of saving lives and preventing injuries on our nation's highways."

"The innovative highway safety projects honored today are vital because deficiencies in the roadway environment contribute to nearly one-third of all traffic deaths," said Roadway Safety Foundation Executive Director Greg Cohen. "The National Roadway Safety Awards are an opportunity to recognize the unsung heroes who plan, engineer and implement creative measures to help save lives on a daily basis and rarely receive credit for doing so."

"Michigan Department of Transportation's statewide rumble strip installations and research confirmed that centerline rumble strips significantly improve public safety as

well as give transportation agencies in Michigan and other states the data they need to implement their own initiatives,” said Kirk Steudle, director of the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The National Roadway Safety Award recipients were evaluated on three criteria: 1) Effectiveness, 2) Innovation, and 3) Efficient use of resources. There were two award categories: 1) Infrastructure and Operational Improvements and 2) Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation.

This year’s Blue Ribbon Panel Judges included: Gregory M. Cohen, executive director, Roadway Safety Foundation; King W. Gee, director of engineering and technical services, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Mike Griffith, director, Office of Safety Technologies, FHWA Office of Safety, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); Peter Kissinger, president & CEO, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety; Bernardo Kleiner, senior program officer and transportation safety specialist, Transportation Research Board; Jennifer Smith, director, Image and Brands, Michelin; Marie B. Walsh, PhD, director, Louisiana Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP); Terecia Wilson, senior fellow, Clemson University Institute for Global Road Safety and Security.

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ATTENTION EDITORS – Please contact Cathy Gillen at (443) 463-4449 or cathy@thegillengroup.com for digital photographs of the award winners following the luncheon in Washington, DC. For more information on the National Roadway Safety Awards visit: www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadwaysafetyawards/.