



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

## **Effort to promote safety in Indian Country runs from December 20, 2010, through January 2, 2011**

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**Washington, D.C.** - Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk today announced that on December 20 the Bureau of Indian Affairs began its 2010 impaired driving prevention campaign, "Don't Shatter the Dream," which is being conducted by BIA and tribal law enforcement agencies in Indian Country through January 2, 2011.

"I want to emphasize how important it is that the Bureau of Indian Affairs and tribal law enforcement agencies work to keep Indian Country's roads safe during the holidays," said Echo Hawk. "The Don't Shatter the Dream" mobilization effort is a tremendous initiative that our officers and tribal police departments work together on to keep our communities safe. I thank all of them for their courageous service and efforts."

The "Don't Shatter the Dream" Indian State Impaired Driving Mobilization is a joint effort by the BIA's Office of Justice Services (OJS), the Indian Affairs Indian Highway Safety Program (IHSP) and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to reduce injuries and save lives.

This campaign unites the BIA and tribal law enforcement agencies across the country to reinforce the message that driving while impaired will not be tolerated. Throughout this holiday season tribal officers are on alert, conducting checkpoints and patrols to protect reservation roadways.

This is the sixth year that the BIA has worked with tribal law enforcement personnel to set up enhanced enforcement on federal Indian lands in an effort to reduce motor vehicle crash injuries and fatalities, especially those attributed to impaired drivers.

Getting alcohol and drug impaired drivers off the road takes a great effort. The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that there were approximately 1.43 million DWI (driving while impaired) arrests in 2007.

According to the NHTSA's Fatality Analysis in Reporting System (FARS), Native Americans are killed and injured at crash rates two to three times higher than the national average. The high rate of traffic fatalities is a concern across Indian Country. In 2007, there were 510 Native Americans killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes. Of those, 64 percent (326 fatalities) involved alcohol. Drinking and driving is even more of a problem for our youth; in 2006, over half of the 15 to 20 year-old Native American drivers killed had some level of alcohol in their system.

The BIA Office of Justice Services is responsible for managing the Bureau's law enforcement, detention facilities and tribal courts programs, either directly in tribal communities or by funding tribally

administered programs through contract and grants.

The IHSP, a part of the BIA's Office of Justice Services, is charged with meeting the traffic safety needs of the 565 federally recognized tribes. One of its goals is to decrease alcohol related motor vehicle crash injuries and fatalities in Indian Country.

NHTSA's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce economic costs due to road traffic crashes, through education, research, safety standards and enforcement activity. For more information, visit [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov).

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