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August 29, 2013

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Maryland MVA Administrator Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Arlington, VA - At its 80th Annual International Conference in Scottsdale Arizona, August 26-28, 2013, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) presented John T. Kuo, Administrator of the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), with the Martha Irwin Award for Lifetime Achievement in Highway Safety. This award is presented to a distinguished individual in recognition of his commitment to and accomplishments in highway safety over the course of his career. Previous recipients include John R. Batiste, Chief of the Washington State Patrol; Major David Salmon of the New York State Police; Colonel Mark Trostel, Chief of the Colorado State Patrol; The Honorable John Hill, former Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and Major in the Indiana State Police; and Commissioner Joe Farrow of the California Highway Patrol.

There were a record number of nominations submitted for consideration for the Martha Irwin Award for Lifetime Achievement in Highway Safety this year. Mr. John Kuo is the recipient of the award in the non-law enforcement category; Captain Leonard P. Casper of the New York State Police is the winner in the law enforcement category.

“John’s many contributions to the cause of public safety have had a profound and very real impact on the state of Maryland,” said AAMVA President & CEO Neil Schuster. “He is certainly well-deserving of the award, and the AAMVA community recognizes the impressive sum of his long and decorated career - decades of hard work and commitment that has helped save lives.”

Kuo has played a key part in legislative initiatives aimed at making roads safer. Through his persistent, personal advocacy for driver safety, he was able to get support of a law requiring all Maryland residents to buckle up, and successfully advocated for a texting while driving ban as well as a hands free cell phone requirement, enforceable as a secondary violation. He led a successful legislative effort to adopt further enhancements to Maryland’s graduated licensing system, and was able to secure Governor O’Malley’s support to officially declare Maryland a Towards Zero Deaths (TZD) state. During his years of service, he’s provided a consistent, strict message to Maryland residents: Stay Safe.

Kuo's dedication to promoting highway safety and the importance of public safety initiatives in Maryland has been the cornerstone of a distinguished career. He established a division within the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration to specifically focus on driver and highway safety and was also able to implement enhancements in all aspects of the driver testing process. Under his leadership, Maryland was the first state in the country to participate in the Driver Education Assessment sponsored through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Kuo was an active member of Maryland's Task Force to Combat Driving Under the Influence of Drugs and Alcohol and the Maryland Highway Safety Foundation, advocating for bans on distracted driving. He was appointed as Maryland's Governor Highway Safety Representative in October 2011, and has worked to increase collaboration between AAMVA and its members with NHTSA, the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and other national safety organizations. He served as President of AAMVA Region I and was also a member of AAMVA's International Board of Directors.

Founded in 1933, AAMVA actively promotes traffic safety and uniformity among North American jurisdictions. Representing chief motor vehicle administrators and law enforcement officials, the association develops uniform programs in driver licensing, vehicle titling/registration and motor carrier services, among others.

For more information visit www.aamva.org.

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