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For More Information – Contact:

Ann Armstrong
Arizona Automobile Theft Authority
Phone: 602 364-2892
ann.armstrong@aata.state.az.us

Pat Elliott
Allstate Insurance Company
Phone: 602 631-6346
pelab@allstate.com

SPECIAL EVENTS TO FOCUS ON CRIME THAT OCCURS EVERY TEN MINUTES IN ARIZONA

Auto Theft Prevention Day Feb 28, Vehicle Theft Prevention and Awareness Day March 4

PHOENIX - (February 27, 2006) – If you live in the State of Arizona, the odds that your car may be stolen are higher than in most of the rest of the United States. According to the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) 2004 Uniform Crime Report, Arizona ranks second in the country for vehicle thefts. A vehicle is stolen in Arizona approximately every ten minutes, impacting the vehicle owner, employers, family members, insurance companies, law enforcement agencies and countless others.

To increase awareness and provide information about auto theft prevention in Arizona, the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA) is hosting an Auto Theft Prevention Day at the State Capitol (1700 W. Washington Street - Senate Lawn Area) on **Tuesday, February 28, 2006 from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**. The event is being held in partnership with Allstate Insurance Company, the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) and statewide law enforcement, insurance and community partners. Planned activities include:

- Vehicle Dismantling Demonstration by the Allstate Dismantling Team at noon. Using common hand tools, the Allstate three-man dismantling team will deconstruct a 2003 Ford F350 in just a few minutes.
- Public displays of auto theft prevention tools including Arizona's Bait Vehicle Program, Vertical Prosecution Program and public awareness programs such as the state's FREE Watch Your Car Program.
- Presentations by Legislative Representatives, AATA, the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Allstate Insurance Company.
- Distribution of Vehicle Theft Prevention Information
- Information about Arizona's Statewide Auto Theft Prevention Day on Saturday, March 4, 2006.

(MORE)

Auto Theft Prevention Day at the Arizona State Capitol will include emphasis on the role of the Arizona Automobile Theft Authority (AATA), its current programs, initiatives, and partnerships with statewide law enforcement, insurance, and community organizations.

The live vehicle-dismantling event sponsored by Allstate Insurance Company will dramatically illustrate how quickly a vehicle can be taken apart by thieves. The team will also demonstrate why most cars are stolen for the value of their parts. The three-man Allstate team, using only hand tools, will strip a 2003 Ford XLT F350 truck down to parts in just a few minutes in front of state officials at the capital.

Auto Theft Prevention Day will also include promotion of effective vehicle theft prevention strategies to prevent cars from being stolen in the first place.

Vehicle Theft Prevention and Awareness Day - March 4, 2006

Arizona residents will have an opportunity to learn more about auto theft prevention during events in their local communities on March 4, 2006. Governor Janet Napolitano has proclaimed that date “Arizona Vehicle Theft Prevention and Awareness Day.” Through collaboration with the Gilbert Police Department and Weingarten Realty Investors, the AATA and dozens of law enforcement partners will be hosting vehicle theft prevention activities to educate citizens about effective auto theft prevention.

Some events will include free VIN etching services, the process of etching the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) number on vehicle windows. This preventive measure makes it easier for law enforcement agencies to recover a stolen vehicle, and also serves as a deterrent to seasoned car thieves. The service can cost several hundred dollars from private vendors but is provided free at community events.

Law enforcement agencies from the following jurisdictions have announced plans to host community events on March 4th: Apache Junction, Casa Grande, Chandler, Cottonwood, Douglas/Cochise County, Florence, Gilbert, Glendale, Goodyear, Mesa, Oro Valley, Peoria, Phoenix, Prescott, Prescott Valley/Yavapai County, Scottsdale, Tempe and Yuma.

For a complete list of scheduled events or for additional information about vehicle theft prevention strategies, programs and statistics, visit the AATA website at www.azwatchyourcar.com.

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