

**Seat Belt Enforcement and Education Campaign to be Conducted Locally as  
Part of Nationwide**

***Click It or Ticket Mobilization May 23 – June 5, 2016***

Law enforcement officers from the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office will be cracking down on unbuckled motorists and passengers as part of the national "Click it or Ticket" campaign.

Beginning May 23<sup>rd</sup> and running through June 5<sup>th</sup>, the annual initiative includes high visibility law enforcement seat belt checkpoints and saturation patrols, as well as local and national publicity designed to ensure that drivers and passengers recognize the life-saving value of seat belts.

"Using a seat belt is the simplest way for a driver and his or her passengers to protect themselves when traveling," said Cumberland County Sheriff Robert Austino. "In 2012 alone, seat belts saved an estimated 12,000 lives nationwide. But, New Jersey experienced over 4,000 crashes where an occupant was not wearing a seatbelt. This resulted in 112 fatalities."

Un-belted motorists and passengers accounted for 21% of the State's motor vehicle fatalities in 2014. The front seat belt usage rate in New Jersey currently stands at 91%. Gary Poedubicky, acting Director of the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, noted that the goal for this year's campaign is to increase the statewide rate to 93%. "To meet our goal, we must continue both enforcement and public outreach efforts that educate all motor vehicle occupants about the importance of buckling up, every ride," he said.

Sheriff Austino added that the campaign will focus on rear seat passengers, as well. Despite laws requiring adult back seat passengers to buckle up, adult back seat belt use stands at only 44 percent.

During the 2014 "Click it or Ticket" campaign, more than 4225 police agencies participated in the two-week initiative. As a result of the effort, law enforcement officers issued 26,049 seat belt citations, 4,895 speeding summonses and made 860 drunken driving arrests.

Robert A. Austino, Sheriff  
Cumberland County