

“Teen Highway Safety Month” June 2008

May 30, 2008

The Youth Safety Council of Vermont, Inc. and Vermont Governor’s Highway Safety Program is promoting June as “Teen Highway Safety Month” throughout Vermont;

Whereas: The Youth Safety Council of Vermont was formed in 2005 with its primary purpose to reduce teen car crashes. The Governor’s Highway Safety Program (GHSP) was created by Congress under the Highway Safety Act of 1966 in response the staggering number of highway fatalities nationwide. The GHSP facilitates and supports, with federal grants, programs to promote safe driving behavior on Vermont highways; and

Whereas: On average, over 40,000 lives (one fatality every 12 minutes) are lost annually on our nation’s highways of which approximately 5,000 (12%) are teens; and

Whereas: In Vermont, on average approximately 79 lives are lost each year and 16% of these fatalities are teens; and

Whereas: 16 to 17 year-olds are the most likely age group to experience a fatal or major car crash; and

Whereas: Teen drivers account for approximately 25% of major crashes in Vermont; and

Whereas: In Vermont, on average, approximately 55% of people killed in teen driver crashes are people other than the driver; and

Whereas: Speed, aggressive driving, inexperience and distractions are the leading causes of serious teen car crashes. Distractions are considered to be a factor in an estimated 80% of all crashes; and

Whereas: When a teen driver has multiple passengers, the risk of a car crash increases 3 to 5 times than that of driving alone, due in large part to distractions; and

Whereas: On average, approximately 56% of teen drivers and passengers involved in a fatal crash were unbuckled; and

Whereas: May and June are often high risk months for teen fatalities and serious crashes to occur. Teen celebrations for Junior Proms, sports championship events and graduation often turn to tragedies for families, schools and communities; and

THEREFORE: I, Governor Jim Douglas, do hereby proclaim June as “Teen Highway

Safety Month”, and respectfully call upon every teen driver to be entirely focused while driving; to buckle-up then turn off cell phones and blackberries prior to starting your vehicle; to diligently obey speed limits and other motor vehicle laws; and to make responsible choices both as a driver and passenger.

Signed:

Date: