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# KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF

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**Attention assignment desks: media advisory**

## **Speed Demons Be Advised! Sheriff's Office Unveils State-of-the-Art Enforcement Vehicle**

**PORT ORCHARD, WA**—The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office is issuing a warning to all speed demons, lane hogs, Euro racers and others with dangerous driving habits—there's a new set of wheels in town to combat aggressive driving behavior. This new, state-of-the-art undercover vehicle could be right in your rear-view mirror and you would not know a Sheriff's traffic enforcement deputy is in the area.

The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, Washington Traffic Safety Commission and Subaru Corporation are hosting a public unveiling of the new traffic enforcement vehicle on Friday, May 26, 2:00 p.m., at Peninsula Subaru, 3888 West State Highway 16 in Bremerton.

"In Kitsap County, the public has become increasingly concerned about aggressive driving behavior," said Sheriff Steve Boyer. "The addition of this vehicle, along with two full-time motorcycle patrol deputies, a school zone and speed enforcement officer and a traffic safety coordinator, sends a clear message that Kitsap County is serious about responding to public concern about school zone enforcement and combating aggressive driving."

The new low-profile traffic safety enforcement vehicle was funded through donations and grant funds provided by a public-private partnership with the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission, the Peninsula Subaru dealership, Subaru Western Region and Subaru Corporate. Kitsap County funded all emergency and police-related equipment that has been added to the vehicle.

"We at Subaru are proud to support our local law enforcement in conducting school zone safety enforcement and combating aggressive driving," said Scott Thompson, Regional Director of Subaru Western Region.

According to Lowell Porter, Director of the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission, data has shown the use of non-traditional law enforcement cars has been very effective in addressing aggressive driving and more serious traffic violations, especially those reported by the public.

"This isn't just about writing tickets and generating dollars," said Sheriff Boyer. "This is about addressing traffic problems and public concern. These unmarked cars are specifically sent to areas where the public has complained about aggressive driving or where there is a high incidence of crashes to work on serious violators. They are a direct response to the public concern."

Porter said Kitsap County was chosen to receive grant funding for this vehicle because the county has identified that it has an aggressive driving problem that is supported by the crash data. Deputy Mike Merrill, Traffic Division Supervisor for the Sheriff's Office, identified the non-traditional traffic enforcement vehicle as a "measure that will help them combat aggressive driving." Deputy Merrill points out that "the Sheriff's performance measures regarding the effectiveness of the undercover vehicle will be based on a reduction in crashes and citizen complaints rather than the number of tickets written."

"We know from national level survey data and from statewide surveys that citizens are more concerned about being killed or injured in a traffic crash than by violent crime or disease," said Jan Angel, Chair of the Kitsap County Board of County Commissioners. According to the Center for Disease Control, the number one cause of death of Americans ages three to 33 is traffic crashes.