



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

August 1, 2017

Gary Jenkins
Chief of Police
Pullman Police Department
260 SE Kamiaken St.
Pullman, WA 99163

Dear Chief Jenkins,

As elected officials entrusted to keep the peace and enforce the law, Sheriffs are directly accountable to their communities, which results in a distinctive relationship with the public. Countering the rise in traffic deaths and injuries, particularly reducing impaired driving, is of paramount importance to sheriffs and for all of law enforcement. Although there are many variables connected to the increase in traffic crashes, impaired driving, speeding, lack of occupant restraints, and inattention are predominant contributors.

Moreover, urban, rural, and unincorporated areas of our nation lack adequate infrastructure and resources to address transportation issues, including those facing victims of domestic violence and older adults. Human traffickers take advantage of our roadways to transport victims. The National Sheriffs' Association sees an opportunity to explore ridesharing options as a way to address these gaps and further increase safety across our communities.

This is why we have partnered with the ridesharing company, Lyft, and why we strongly believe that ridesharing companies should operate in communities across the country. Lyft is now connecting over 6 million riders per week in over 300 American cities, and is dedicated to making a positive impact on roadway safety and improving the quality of life in communities.

Ridesharing companies like Lyft are playing a critical role in the everyday lives by increasing access to safe, affordable, reliable access to transportation. Drivers undergo a rigorous and thorough background check and the on-demand apps have built in a number of additional enhanced safety features that provide further safety benefits for passengers and drivers.

Not only is ridesharing changing the way people are able to safely get around their community, these new forms of transportation are improving public safety. Studies have shown the

availability of services like Lyft reduce alcohol-related driving arrests by up to 51% ([Dills & Mulholland](#)), reduce assault and disorderly conduct arrests by up to 42% ([Dills & Mulholland](#)), and reduce DWI deaths by more than 10%. ([UT Austin](#)). Also, 88% of Lyft passengers already say they are less likely to drive drunk because of the availability of Lyft ([2017 Lyft Economic Impact Report](#)). The ability to get a safe ride at the touch of a button means making the smart choice is also the easy choice.

The National Sheriffs' Association and its committees understand that an effective community approach, to include alternatives to driving while impaired, maintaining safe speeds while on the roadways, eliminating distracted driving, providing equitable access to alternative modes of transportation for older adults, and curbing victimization, improves safety and improves the quality of life in our communities.

We encourage lawmakers and regulators to support legislation and rules to promote ridesharing.

Thank you for helping to keep our roadways safe and our communities a better place to live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Whetsel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Sheriff John Whetsel (Ret.)
Oklahoma County, OK
Chairman, NSA Traffic Safety Committee