

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MEDIA ADVISORY
Charlie Crist, Governor
Stephanie Kopelousos, Interim Secretary

WHAT: Joint FDOT/FHP Press Conference

SUBJECT: I-95 Enhanced Penalty Zone Program
(See program news release below)

WHEN: Friday, March 30, 2007
11 a.m.

WHERE: FDOT Palm Beach Operations Center
Auditorium
7900 Forest Hill Boulevard
West Palm Beach, FL

PARTICIPANTS: FDOT
Hesham Ali, District Director of Operations

FHP
Lt Tim Frith, Public Affairs Officer

PHOTO OPS. Sample signs will be on display,

Ride alongs with FHP Troopers will be
available.

CONTACTS: Barbara Kelleher, FDOT District Public
Information Director, Cell: 954-249-4521

Lt. Tim Frith, FHP Public Affairs Officer,
Office: 561-540-3304

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NEWS RELEASE
Charlie Crist, Governor
Stephanie Kopelousos, Interim Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2007

CONTACT: Marianne Trussell
Chief Safety Officer
Phone: 850 - 245-1504

Pilot Program for Enhanced Penalty Zones Launches on April 2, 2007

TALLAHASSEE – Enhanced Penalty Zones will be launched on April 2 in Brevard, Palm Beach and Duval counties. Beginning April 2, 2007, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will post Enhanced Penalty Speed Zone signs identifying the areas to the traveling public. The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) will begin issuing additional speeding fines of \$50 above the current speeding fine on May 1, 2007, in the enhanced penalty zones.

The enhanced penalty zone fines assessed will be distributed as follows:

§ Fifty percent of the \$50 fine will be allocated to the Health Care Administration to provide an enhanced Medicaid payment to nursing homes for brain and spinal cord injury Medicaid patients.

§ The other fifty percent of the fine will be given for financial support to certified trauma centers in the counties where enhanced penalty zones are established.

Brevard, Palm Beach and Duval Counties will be the first locations in Florida to launch the Enhanced Penalty Zones which will increase fines in designated areas to reduce speeding related crashes. If the pilot program is successful, other Florida counties with higher than average crash rates related to speeding will be addressed.

The enhanced penalty zone in Brevard County is just north of State Road 528 (Exit 205, Cocoa) to the Volusia County Line, between Interstate 95 mile marker 206 and mile marker 233; the enhanced penalty zone in Palm Beach County runs north of State Road 806 at the Boynton Beach City Limit sign (Exit 52) and ends just south of Gateway Boulevard (Exit 59), within the limits of Interstate 95 mile marker 53 and mile marker 59; and the enhanced penalty zone in Duval County will be set from 3/4 – mile south of State Road 202/ J. Turner Butler Boulevard (Exit 344) to 3/4 – mile north of Alternate US 1/ Emerson Street (Exit 347), within the limits of Interstate 95 mile marker 342 and mile marker 348.

The pilot program was developed through legislation (HB 1465) passed during the 2006 Legislative Session by Representative Thad Altman of District 30, Representative Gayle Harrell of District 81 and Representative Adam Hasner of District 87. Representative Altman, Representative Harrell and Representative Hasner wanted to create a pilot program through FDOT for enhanced penalty zones on state roads in areas with higher than average crash rates related to speeding.

“Too many people die needlessly every day in Florida because of speed,” said Interim Transportation Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos. “We believe

the higher fines will encourage people to slow down and discourage them from speeding, saving lives in the process.”

This pilot program prohibits operation of a vehicle at a speed greater than posted in the enhanced penalty zone; directs the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) to tabulate citations issued within enhanced penalty zones and makes available certain information; directs FDOT, the DHSMV, and the Department of Education (DOE) to conduct a study and report to the Governor and the Legislature on ways to reduce fatalities; and provides a penalty for violation of posted speed in an enhanced penalty zone.

“Consider what is at stake,” said Marianne Trussell, FDOT Chief Safety Officer. “In 2005, 3,533 people died on Florida roadways making the state’s fatality rate 1.76 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, a six percent increase from 2004. We can and must do better!”

FDOT, FHP and the FDOT Motor Carrier Compliance Office (MCCO) will launch and monitor this pilot program and its results closely. For more information about the Enhanced Penalty Zones visit <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety.htm>. You can also e-mail suggestions, comments and questions regarding the pilot program to Marianne.Trussell@dot.state.fl.us.