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**US Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and BMW of North America President Jim O’Donnell share concerns about Distracted Driving**

**Woodcliff Lake, NJ – December 9, 2010…** U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and BMW of North America president Jim O’Donnell met in Washington, D.C. today to raise awareness about the problem of distracted driving. O’Donnell showed the Secretary materials from BMW’s **DRIVE IT HOME, DON’T TXT & DRIVE** campaign, piloted this year in driving schools across the country, which will be expanded in 2011. The campaign was inspired by Secretary LaHood’s focus on the subject at the Department of Transportation.

“The most necessary skill for safe driving, especially among the young and inexperienced, is attention to driving,” said Jim O’Donnell. “Our Don’t TXT & Drive campaign coupled with road course training helps students understand and experience what can happen when they are distracted while driving. It’s a life changing experience and BMW is committed to the message of Don’t TXT & Drive and to training as many as possible to properly and safely handle their vehicle.”

After the meeting, Secretary LaHood joined the BMW team outside the Transportation Department headquarters to sign the campaign signature car emblazoned with the message **DRIVE IT HOME, DON’T TXT & DRIVE**.

“Distracted driving is an epidemic on America’s roadways,” said Transportation Secretary LaHood.  “Since our first national Distracted Driving Summit, we have recognized the importance of working together with law enforcement, legislators, advocates, and industry to put a stop to this deadly behavior. I applaud BMW’s efforts to help raise awareness through their ‘Don’t TXT & Drive’ campaign.”

BMW of North America launched **DRIVE IT HOME, DON’T TXT & DRIVE** in the spring of 2010 as part of its Teen Driving School series. The schools are organized through BMW dealers across the U.S. and have trained hundreds of young drivers in acquiring advanced driving skills, allowing them to experience first-hand, but in a controlled environment, the dangers of distracted driving. The mobile Teen Driving Schools are just one part of BMW’s overall driver skills training program that also includes the BMW Performance Center in South Carolina and partnership with the Foundation of the BMW Car Club teen driver safety program.

**BMW Group In America**

BMW of North America, LLC has been present in the United States since 1975. Rolls-Royce Motor Cars NA, LLC began distributing vehicles in 2003. The BMW Group in the United States has grown to include marketing, sales, and financial service organizations for the BMW brand of motor vehicles, including motorcycles, the MINI brand, and the Rolls-Royce brand of Motor Cars; DesignworksUSA, a strategic design consultancy in California; a technology office in Silicon Valley and various other operations throughout the country. BMW Manufacturing Co., LLC in South Carolina is part of BMW Group’s global manufacturing network and is the exclusive manufacturing plant for all X5 and X3 Sports Activity Vehicles and X6 Sports Activity Coupes. The BMW Group sales organization is represented in the U.S. through networks of 338 BMW passenger car centers, 336 BMW Sports Activity Vehicle centers, 143 BMW motorcycle retailers, 100 MINI passenger car dealers, and 31 Rolls-Royce Motor Car dealers. BMW (US) Holding Corp., the BMW Group’s sales headquarters for North America, is located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey.

Information about BMW Group products is available to consumers via the Internet at: [www.bmwgroupna.com](http://www.bmwgroupna.com)

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