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Contact: Rosemary Mascali, rmascali@transitsolutions.org; 516-242-8121

Long Island Communities Rally around Car Free Day

LI Colleges and Universities Vie for the most Pledges for the 2nd Annual Car Free Day LI

With less than a week until the annual international celebration of Car Free Day on September 22, Long Island counties, towns, villages and colleges have joined to celebrate the 2nd Annual Car Free Day Long Island, the day when Long Islanders are asked to leave their cars home or drive less, and try more sustainable modes of travel instead. To date, almost 2,000 Long Islanders have taken the pledge.

This year many Long Island municipalities have accepted the Car Free Day Long Island Challenge to celebrate Car Free Day in their communities. Leading the charge is County Executive Steve Bellone who has encouraged County employees and residents to join him in being car free or car-lite by taking mass transit, walk, bike or carpool to work, to help reduce traffic, conserve energy, reduce harmful emissions and save money. The County has numerous activities planned including a Bicycle Summit at its Hauppauge location with panel discussions on bike safety and infrastructure, and making food trucks available for lunch at the event to avoid the need for employees and visitors to drive. The County Executive will also be lending his support at the island-wide Car Free Day LI Rally being held at Farmingdale State College on Thursday, September 18, 2-5pm. The Rally will build awareness of the impact of single occupancy vehicles on our environment, health and economy, and provide information about more sustainable transportation choices.

Long Island towns and villages have also accepted the challenge. Proclamations declaring September 22 as Car Free Day Long Island were passed by the Town of Brookhaven, Town of Babylon, Town of Huntington, and Village of Lawrence. The Town of Huntington conducted a special transportation day for Town employees to encourage them to pledge and provide them information on ways to get around without a car. In the Town of North Hempstead, Supervisor Judi Bosworth and Councilwomen DeGiorgio and Kaplan have taken the pledge to be car free or car-lite by carpooling and walking that day. A founding member of the Car Free Day LI, the Town of North Hempstead has also promoted the event to Town residents, employees and school districts.

Participation is strong among Long Island Colleges and Universities who are seeking "bragging rights" for the most pledges by a college or university. The effort at Stony Brook University, the winner of this category last year and the current leader, is being spearheaded by James O'Connor, Director of Sustainability & Transportation Operations in Stony Brook University's Office of Sustainability. "In an effort to promote alternate modes of transportation, decrease vehicle emission and ease congestion, Stony Brook University is once again joining other sustainability leaders on Long Island by participating



in Car Free Day Long Island. We were proud to have provided the highest number of pledges by a university or college last year and look forward to participating in the event again.”

Other colleges vying for the title this year include Adelphi University, SUNY College at Old Westbury, Briarcliffe College, Touro Law Center, LIU-Post and Farmingdale State College. “SUNY College at Old Westbury’s Office of Commuter Programs & Services is very excited to team up with Car Free Day LI. We am always encouraging commuter students to look into their mass transit options since a large majority of them drive. The incentive of raffle prizes is a great motivator,” commented Veronica Gerosimo, Director of Commuter Programs & Services.

Commuters, students and residents can pledge to go car free or car-lite at the Car Free Day LI website (www.carfreedayli.com). Whether commuting to work or school, or running errands around town, using your car less qualifies for participation in Car Free Day LI. Even those who are already using commute alternatives can take the pledge. Participants are eligible to win raffle prizes including commuter bikes, gift cards, and theater and sports tickets.

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