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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DMV TESTING AT SOUTH AIKEN HIGH SCHOOL

Aiken, S.C., March 2, 2004 – The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is now conducting a pilot project at South Aiken High School that gives students the opportunity to take the knowledge test at school rather than visiting a DMV office. Marcia Adams, Acting DMV Executive Director, and Senator Greg Ryberg of Aiken County visited the high school today to observe the testing.

To be eligible, students must be 15 years old or within six months of their fifteenth birthday. Those that pass receive a waiver that allows them to obtain their beginner permit at a DMV office without having to take the test. If they are under the age of 15 when they pass the test, they must wait until they are 15 to use the waiver.

“The testing makes it more convenient for students and parents,” said Marcia Adams, Acting DMV Executive Director. “It can be difficult to take time off from work and we’re very pleased to be able to offer parents another option. Testing in the high school setting saves time for parents and helps reduce the wait time in our branch offices.”

South Aiken High School was the first high school to participate in the pilot project. Dutch Fork High School in Irmo is also participating. The schools determine the testing schedule based on the number of students who apply. Approximately 50 students signed up to take the test today at South Aiken High School. All of the tests are monitored by school driver instructors and scored by DMV officials.

The group testing is just one of a series of new initiatives DMV is pursuing. DMV is expanding its services by developing new online transactions, providing an electronic interface to insurance companies, allowing dealerships to issue license plates and registrations, and expanding commercial driver service centers. DMV is also investigating the possibility of county tax offices issuing vehicle registrations.

“I’m excited that DMV is giving the students and parents this kind of opportunity,” Senator Ryberg said. “Governor Sanford wanted DMV to be a more efficient agency and it is. From what I see today, DMV is taking the service to the people rather than making the people come to them. That’s a major improvement.”

DMV is currently negotiating with other high schools that are considering program participation.

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SCDMV NEW INITIATIVES

New Online Transactions

- MVR Transaction
 - Now testing the MVR transaction that will allow individual customers to purchase an official copy of their own driving record
 - Currently developing security measures
 - Planned implementation in March 2004
- Vehicle Inquiry Transaction
 - Now developing the vehicle inquiry transaction for account customers
 - Only available to commercial customers with pre-established accounts and approved, signed privacy agreements
 - DMV Call Center now handles over 30,000 calls a year for this type of transaction
 - Online transaction will significantly reduce these calls
 - Planned implementation in June 2004

Electronic Vehicle Registration (EVR)

- Developed business rules and requirements for the EVR program which allows dealerships and salvage companies to register vehicles electronically through the Phoenix system
- Began Pilot Project in January 2004 with 16 participating dealerships
- Saves both time and money for dealerships and salvage companies
- Dealers may offer the service to their customers for an additional fee
- Reduces the number of manpower hours required for these transactions in DMV field offices

Insurance Interface

- Developing an insurance interface to allow companies to submit insurance policy changes to the department electronically
- Will automate a time-consuming manual procedure for both the insurance companies and DMV
- May reduce the number of uninsured motorists that go undetected and avoid unnecessary paperwork for insurance companies and SC citizens who change policies
- Planned implementation in March 2004

Pilot Motor Carrier Services CDL Site

- Conducting a pilot project in the Irmo-Ballentine DMV office to offer CDL as well as Motor Carrier Services to truck drivers
- Eliminates the need for truck drivers to drive to Columbia for IRP and IFTA services
- Will open additional sites around the state based on the success of the current pilot
- DMV is currently looking for additional sites at DMV offices across the state

DMV/County Office Vehicle Registration

- Investigating the possibility of registration and decal issuance in county tax offices.
- Four counties have volunteered to pilot the project: Dorchester, Anderson, Georgetown and Clarendon.
- Now working with these counties to develop an implementation plan.