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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Oct. 10, 2018

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## **Improving safety can help put the brakes on fatalities**

Jacque Tierce of Great Bend lost her daughter, Danielle, less than five months ago in a car crash.

“She was texting and driving when she ran into the back of a semi going 65 miles per hour. She didn’t brake,” Tierce said. “She simply never saw the semi because she was distracted by her phone.”

WIBW-TV Anchor Chris Fisher lost his father in a crash in February. He was less than five minutes from the jobsite.

“It was an accident he would have undoubtedly walked away from if only he had been wearing his seat belt,” Fisher said. “He wouldn’t have even had to climb out the window because both doors still opened.”

Tierce and Fisher were joined by Kansas Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Manager Chris Bortz, Lisa Razor of Lawrence and Kristen Nichol with Avenue Driving in Overland Park at the annual Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day news conference at the Capitol today. The campaign encourages everyone – drivers, passengers, pedestrians and cyclists – to use caution every day to help decrease traffic fatalities.

A senior Car/Fit was also a part the event. Participating in a Car/Fit shows how the fit of your vehicle affects your driving and that adjusting your vehicle to your changing needs could make a lifesaving difference.

Last year, 461 people were killed in traffic crashes across Kansas.

“Nearly 95 percent of all traffic fatalities are due to driver error,” Bortz said. “That’s why it’s important for drivers to give 100 percent of their attention to the task of driving.”

Organizations that work together on the annual safety campaign with KDOT include the Kansas Turnpike Authority, Kansas Highway Patrol, AAA of Kansas, Kansas Contractors Association, Kansas Family Partnership, Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office, Federal Highway Administration and the Kansas Society of Professional Engineers.

For more information on Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day, visit the [KDOT website](#).

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