November 7, 2017
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OPERATION FIREFLY LAUNCHES SIXTH SEASON WITH KICKOFF EVENT
FEATURING COUNCILMEMBER NURY MARTINEZ IN VAN NUYS

Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition and AARP in Los Angeles to distribute 3,500 bike lights this winter season

LOS ANGELES, CA —

Today, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (LACBC) will kick off its sixth year of Operation Firefly, a bike light distribution and education program, sponsored by AARP in Los Angeles. Starting at 5PM, Councilmember Nury Martinez will kick off the season at the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and the Orange Line Bike Path. Members of the public who are in need of bike lights are encouraged to come with their bicycles.

During Operation Firefly, LACBC volunteers (“Team Firefly”) go to undisclosed locations during the evening commute. Here, they distribute lights and safety information to people riding in the dark without lights. Team Firefly surveys all light recipients to collect data on why they are riding at night without lights, and share educational materials about safety and legal requirements when riding at night. LACBC ensures bilingual Spanish speaking volunteers are at each distribution.

“The residents of my area rely on public transit, biking and walking to get to school and to work,” said Councilmember Nury Martinez. “It is why I prioritize the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in all of my transportation work. Operation Firefly is a tremendous program that helps those who are riding bikes in these high traffic areas get the tools they need to save their lives.”
This season of Operation Firefly - which aims to reach 3,500 riders - is sponsored by AARP in Los Angeles. "AARP California is proud to support Operation Firefly, a program that aligns with our goal of helping to transform transportation for people of all ages and creating a more age-friendly Los Angeles," said Nancy McPherson, AARP California State Director. This year, light recipients will also get limited edition AARP TAP cards pre-loaded with a bus or train fare.

Last year, Operation Firefly completed 43 on-street distributions in ten different cities in Los Angeles County and reached over 3,000 people county-wide from November of 2016 to March of 2017. LACBC’s on-street volunteer team logged 645 hours, growing the program by 20% over the previous year. This season, LACBC and AARP in Los Angeles aim to distribute 3,500 lights, a 17% increase over the 2016-17 season.

“Thanks to support from volunteers, partner organizations, and sponsors, we’ve been able to grow Operation Firefly and reach more people each winter since we started,” said Colin Bogart, LACBC’s Education Director. “The first year we served 500 people and we’re excited to relaunch the program again this fall with a goal of serving seven times the number LA County residents.”

Tonight, from 5 PM to 7 PM, Operation Firefly will be handing out bike lights to those who need them at the intersection of Sepulveda Blvd. and the Orange Line Bike Path. LACBC encourages people who don’t have lights to stop by with their bikes, meet Councilmember Martinez, and celebrate the launch of season six with Team Firefly.

About LACBC:

Founded in 1998, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition is a membership-based, volunteer driven nonprofit organization that works to make all communities in Los Angeles County into healthy, safe and fun places to ride a bike. Through advocacy, education, and outreach, LACBC brings together the diverse bicycling community in a united mission to improve the bicycling environment and quality of life for the entire region. For more information, visit www.la-bike.org.

About AARP:

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million that helps people turn their goals and dreams into 'Real Possibilities' by changing the way America defines aging. With staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and promote the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare security,
financial security and personal fulfillment. AARP also advocates for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the world’s largest circulation magazine, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @aarp and our CEO @JoAnn_Jenkins on Twitter.

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