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Thanksgiving alert: Feds launch massive campaign to arrest...seatbelt violators!

Terrorists want to kill us. Why are 10,600 police agencies focusing on seatbelts?

WASHINGTON, DC — Americans worried about the threat of terrorism this Thanksgiving may be relieved to know that 10,600 law enforcement agencies will be prowling the highways over the long weekend.

The bad news is, they aren't looking for terrorists — they're launching a massive, nationwide effort to arrest or ticket Americans for not wearing seatbelts.

"The federal government has warned us that murderous terrorists could strike again at any time. So why are police resources being diverted to stop, harass, ticket, or arrest ordinary Americans who forget to wear a seatbelt?" asked Steve Dasbach, the national director of the Libertarian Party.

"It is an absolute outrage that at a time when terrorists have killed 5,000 Americans — and threaten to kill more — the highest priority of law enforcement seems to be setting up random checkpoints in all 50 states to crack down on seatbelt violators."

Yesterday, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Chairman Marion Blakey said 10,600 police departments in all 50 states will be mobilized to use roadblocks, checkpoints, and unmarked patrol cars to track down disobedient motorists.

The NTSB justified the massive police dragnet — dubbed Operation ABC ("America Buckles up Children") — as a way to improve compliance with child safety laws. However, the Transportation Department admits 97% of parents already obey child seatbelt laws.

The seatbelt crackdown may be even more disruptive than usual because more Americans are expected to travel by car this Thanksgiving, thanks to lingering fears about air travel. The National Safety Council estimates that 30 million Thanksgiving travelers will take to the highways — a number that "may be even greater" than in previous years.

If that's true, it means that even more Americans than usual will be inconvenienced, interrogated, ticketed, arrested, or stuck in traffic jams, said Dasbach.

"Operation ABC is a mistake," he said. "At a time when a *real*, deadly threat haunts America, this is a monumental waste of police resources. Operation ABC will make millions of Americans curse meddling bureaucrats and overzealous law enforcement officers — on a weekend when we should be enjoying the freedom of America, and giving thanks for life's blessings."

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