



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

May 30, 2008

**The Honorable M. Jodi Rell
Governor
State of Connecticut
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106**

Dear Governor Rell,

In response to the recurring motor vehicle tragedies involving teen drivers in Connecticut, the Teen Safe Driving Task Force (Task Force) was established under your direction. The Task Force examined national and state data, reviewed national public health and highway safety research, and collected public comments regarding teen driving safety concerns.

Through this thorough examination of information, it is clear that driving has inherent risks; moreover, teen drivers, particularly 16 and 17-year-olds, have a higher incidence of being in a deadly motor vehicle crash versus the general population. Nonetheless, teen motor vehicle crashes can be reduced through increasing teen behind the wheel training, heightening knowledge and awareness of safety issues, greater parental involvement as well as continuous review of state laws and requirements for teen drivers.

The Task Force proposed both immediate and long-term solutions. With your support, many of the Task Force's suggested changes have been adopted into state law. In addition, the Task Force developed the attached long-term recommendations to help Connecticut prevent further accidents, injuries and deaths.

On behalf of the Task Force, we thank you for your continued support and leadership on this public health, safety and licensing issue.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Robert Ward in black ink.

Robert Ward
Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles

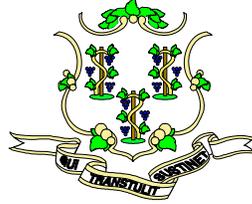
Handwritten signature of J. Robert Galvin in black ink.

J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH, MBA
Commissioner, Department of Public Health

Enclosure: Final Report

Report of the Governor's Task Force on Teen Safe Driving

STATE OF CONNECTICUT



**REPORT OF THE GOVERNOR'S
TASK FORCE ON TEEN SAFE DRIVING**

MAY 30, 2008

Commissioner Robert M. Ward, Co-Chair
Department of Motor Vehicles

Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH, MBA Co-Chair
Department of Public Health

Report of the Governor’s Task Force on Teen Safe Driving

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II. SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Governor M. Jodi Rell convened this Task Force in November 2007, amid rising concern that State government, along with other community and private sector partners, could do more to prevent crashes, injuries and deaths among teenage drivers. In the four months leading up to the creation of the Task Force, there were two major multi-fatal crashes in Connecticut. Four teens were killed in one crash and three were killed in another. These incidents drew serious concern from the public, especially from the parents of teens, and teenagers themselves.

“These accidents and their resulting injuries are tragic. Even one death is horrific and ripples through the lives of friends, families and communities,” Governor Rell said when appointing the Task Force. “We need to find new strategies for dealing with this issue. While curfews and passenger restriction laws have produced a drop in accidents and injuries among teen drivers in Connecticut since tougher laws were enacted nearly four years ago, fatal accidents remain a serious problem for these drivers and we must take more aggressive action.” - November 28, 2007

This report represents the examination requested by Governor Rell.

To start, the Task Force undertook an extensive review of the following issues related to teen driving: State laws; crash, injury and death statistics; requirements for driver training; parental and guardian knowledge and attitudes of current and proposed laws, training and safety; enforcement of teen driving laws by State and local police; licensing examination and violation record-keeping processes; prosecution and judicial handling of violations; community networks for disseminating and reinforcing safety messages; regional, cultural and ethnic diversity; public health concerns as related to injuries and deaths; and federal reviews of national best practices for developing enforcement, training and licensing standards.

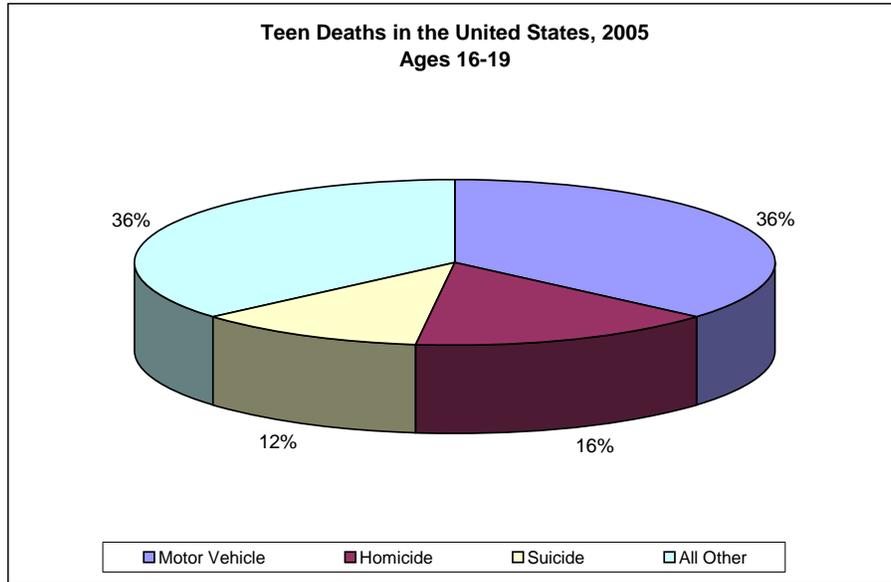
From this work, the Task Force produced immediate short-term recommendations that resulted in a series of law changes passed during in the 2008 session of the Connecticut General Assembly. It is also further recommending, in fulfilling the Governor's charge to the Task Force to also take a broad look at the issue, a list of twenty (20) proposed proposals for further study. These focus on various approaches by State government and its partners joined together for the prevention of crashes, injuries and deaths.

Both the Governor and the General Assembly showed leadership, foresight, courage and determination in tackling this prevalent public safety and public health concern.

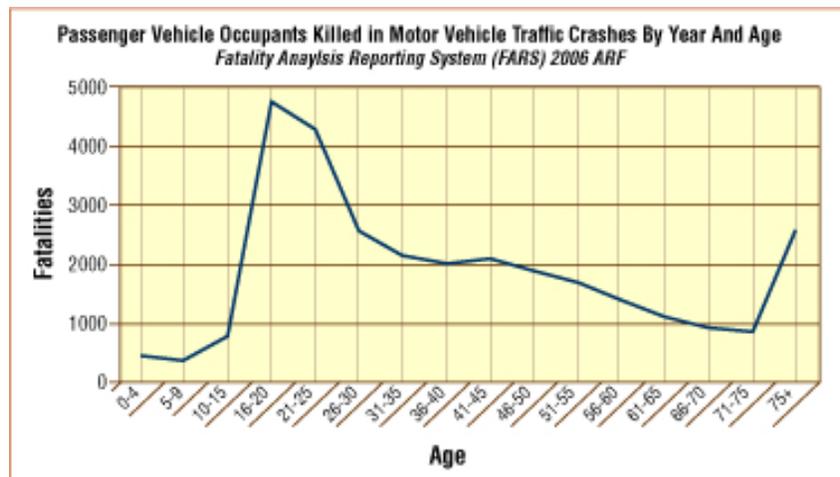
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Background

Motor vehicles crashes are the leading cause of death of U. S. teenagers, accounting for 36% all teenager deaths nationally in 2005. Mile for mile, teenagers are involved in three times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers. Research shows that immaturity and inexperience are primary factors contributing to these deadly crashes by young drivers. In addition, inexperience and immaturity combined with speed, drinking and driving, not wearing seat belts, distracted driving (cell phone use, loud music, other teen passengers, etc.), drowsy driving, nighttime driving, and other drug use aggravate this problem.¹



(SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

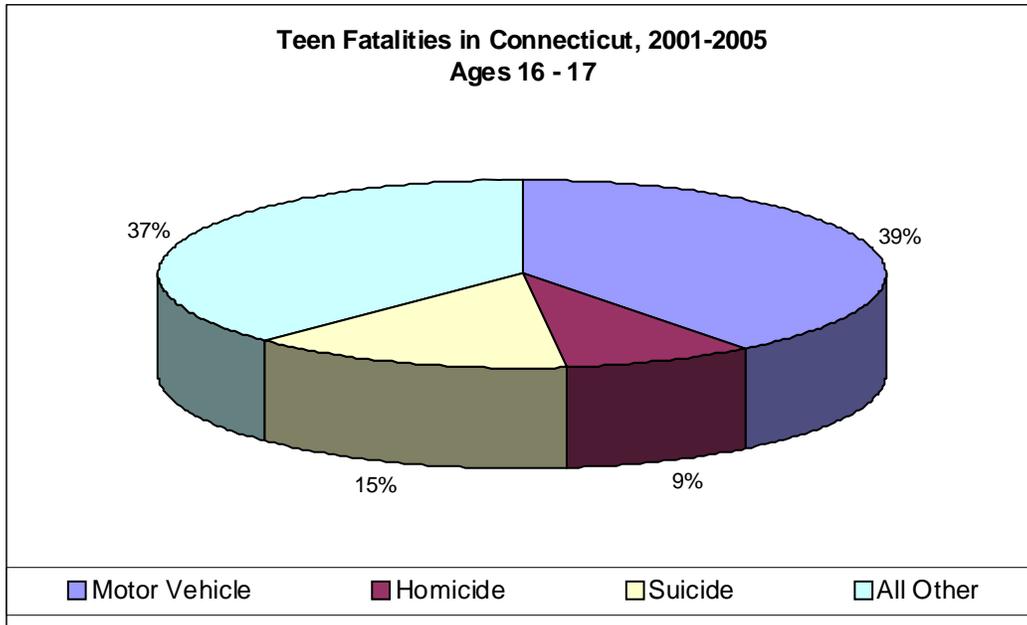


(SOURCE: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

¹ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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In Connecticut for the years 2001-2005, motor vehicles crashes were the leading cause of death among the 16 and 17 year-olds, who were the primary focus of the Task Force's study. This particular age group was selected because these drivers are newly licensed and have the least driving experience. Crashes are responsible for 39% of all fatalities among this age group in the State.² This age group of Connecticut teens is approximately twice as likely to die or be hospitalized from a motor vehicle crash as State residents overall.³



(SOURCE: State Department of Public Health Vital Statistics 2001-2005)

When Governor Rell created the Task Force, she appointed two leaders in State government to direct this study: Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Commissioner Robert M. Ward and Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, MD, MPH, MBA. As co-chairs, they were asked to undertake a multi-pronged approach to the teen driving issue, including:

- Devising new and effective strategies of awareness.
- Re-examining penalties associated with violations with which teens are frequently charged.
- Creating a statewide partnership to target and execute consistent teen-driving safety messaging to both parents and teens.

² Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics, 2001-2005

³ Connecticut Office of Health Care Access Hospital discharge data 2000-2004

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Each co-chair appointed Task Force members based upon professional and/or personal experience with teens, and, specifically, teen driving. The following constituencies were represented:

- Advocacy
- Community outreach
- Education
- Insurance
- Judicial
- Law enforcement
- Media
- Medicine
- Motor vehicles
- Parents
- Public health
- Teens

The Work

The first meeting of the Task Force took place on December 7, 2007, out of which a Laws Subcommittee was formed to immediately respond to the Governor's request for a series of short-term recommendations to be considered by the legislature during the 2008 session of the General Assembly.

The subcommittee met with public safety and driving experts on several occasions in December 2007 and January 2008. It received extensive statistical analyses and reports regarding possible changes to Connecticut's existing Graduated Driver's License (GDL) statutes in order to improve public health and highway safety.

On January 25, 2008, the Task Force approved the recommendations of the subcommittee for changes to Connecticut's teen driving laws. Immediately these short-term recommendations were presented to Governor Rell who included them as part of her legislative agenda.

The Task Force also decided early in its discussions to commission a public opinion survey regarding general attitudes toward teenagers' driving habits and ways to combat such problems. Results from this phone survey were presented to the Task Force at its January 2008 meeting. This information served to focus Task Force's suggested legislative revisions and long-term recommendations.

In summary, the phone survey determined that more than three-quarters of parents and other adults surveyed supported increasing the amount of supervised driving required for drivers under the age of 18 before they receive their license. This survey also indicated strong public support for:

- A longer learner's permit period for teens ages 16 and 17.

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- A longer period of time when drivers under age 18 are banned from driving passengers other than their parents. For example, the survey indicated that most parents are convinced that drivers under 18 with passengers in their vehicles – particularly passengers in the same age group - are more likely to cause or have a crash.
- Increased penalties for drivers under 18 with more than one moving traffic violation.
- Extending the night-driving curfew for drivers under 18.

On February 11, 2008, tragedy struck again in Connecticut, when two more teens – ages 17 and 18 – were killed in a motor vehicle crash on the Wilbur Cross Parkway in Milford. The 18-year-old driver had received his driver's license only a few months prior to the crash. Governor Rell wrote to the General Assembly leadership looking for swift and quick passage of the proposed teen driving laws, and an immediate transmittal to her office for signing.

“We cannot – we must not – lose any more young lives,” the Governor wrote. “Today – with the shadow of last night’s tragedy not yet dispelled – I ask you to work with me over the next week to craft a consensus bill that we can act upon no later than March 15. I ask that you convene your respective chambers by that date to pass a bill that I can immediately sign into law.” - February 12, 2008

Meanwhile, the Task Force began holding a series of public hearings to solicit information and ideas from teens, parents, community members, law enforcement, school administrators and others. Public comments proved invaluable to the committee as it sought to find new ways to approach the issue of teen driving safety. The overwhelming majority of people attending public forums reported that greater training, more parental involvement in the training, stiffer laws and better awareness of safety were needed.

Those same sentiments were echoed in the hundreds of e-mails that Task Force members received through its web site at www.ct.gov/teendriving. One person wrote poignantly:

“...the issue of teen driving hits very close to home with me. I was driving on route 322 the morning of the Wolcott crash and was directly behind the crash the killed three Wolcott teenagers. My car was about 2 car lengths away. I am also a freshmen social studies teacher at Wolcott High School and was on my way home from the cancelled classes that morning. I lost a student that day. As a 24 year old in my second year of teaching I can't begin to tell you the effect that this experience has had on me, but even more profound is the effect that it has had on the rest of my students and the school community. It has been a daily struggle, both for me and the students and the media coverage has at times only added salt to our wounds. I guess I am writing because I am ready to turn my grief into action. It seems that reckless teen driving is turning into an epidemic.”

All e-mails to the site were shared with Task Force members. Members heard from residents across the State expressing a range of concerns about teen driving laws, policies

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and training. Some expressed a desire not to change State laws, but most expressed support for stronger measures, more training and increased parental involvement. Many even volunteered to aid in helping spread public awareness on teen safe driving messages.

The Task Force also reached out to teenagers – both the drivers-in-training and the soon-to-be drivers. This included visits to high schools around the state to talk directly to students and their parents. Many invitations came following Governor Rell's letter to school superintendents and high school principals requesting that they hold assemblies to make students more aware of the laws and safety issues. Teachers seized upon the topic, incorporating it into English and civics lessons, with students writing their opinions and questions, and sending them to the Task Force members for consideration. Student newspapers sought interviews on the subject. While many teens did not want further restrictions and limitations, most understood that safety was a primary concern and that such efforts would help save lives.

After fulfilling its obligation to provide short-term suggestions, the Task Force turned to a more in-depth study of teen driving from a historical, cultural, legal and statistical perspective. Members identified four major areas to address in order to more fully examine specific approaches to teen driving: training and education; public and parental awareness; laws, policies and regulations and public health/multicultural health. Subcommittees of the Task Force were formed to examine each of these topics. Each subcommittee reviewed literature, examined statistics, talked to authorities and experts in the field and consulted with federal officials about national trends in the area of teen driving safety.

These recommendations, developed with an awareness of Connecticut's diverse population, emphasize the following:

- Continuing to strengthen driver education, examination, training and re-training programs.
- Ongoing reviews of laws and regulations.
- Maintaining an ongoing public education program coupled with the fostering of community networks to promote teen driving safety information.
- Partnering with law enforcement on safety awareness and aid in enforcement when possible.
- Examining State Attorney, Judicial and DMV processes to ensure that the violations and suspensions are done promptly.
- Promoting a high school curriculum that includes classes on teen driver safety as well as crash and injury prevention.

In April 2008, Governor Rell created a Center for Teen Safe Driving within the DMV to oversee Connecticut's efforts to promote and improve safety awareness among young drivers and their parents or guardians. Specifically, the Center for Teen Safe Driving at DMV will:

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- Independently research and conduct studies about the effectiveness of Connecticut's graduated driver licensing laws.
- Oversee an extensive public and parental awareness campaign.
- Compile statistics on teen driver violations.
- Act as an information resource for the parents and the public at large regarding all aspects of teen safe driving.
- Help to coordinate law-enforcement efforts with local and State police, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT).
- Create public-private partnerships for involvement in teen safe driving programs.
- Provide periodic reports to the Governor and DMV Commissioner on current trends and the effectiveness of laws, policies and programs focused on teen safe driving.

Conclusion

As the work of this Task Force ends, we note that this is an historic moment. It was just over 11 years ago – January 1997 – that Connecticut instituted teen-specific driver training requirements. They stipulated that a learner's permit holder must have the permit for a minimum of 4 months while receiving driver education and 6 months for home training. This marked a turn at which Connecticut recognized the unique need for providing this age group with increased experience and training so that a strong measure of safety was incorporated in those first few months of learning to drive.

Now the new laws that resulted from the work of this Task Force's recommendations as well as the long-term recommendations that follow in this report build on that approach. Parents as well as the community of partners interested in teen driving safety and crash prevention may use these to better safeguard, train and evaluate our young drivers as we work toward our common goal of preventing injuries and fatalities among this vulnerable population in Connecticut. This report sets a benchmark for Connecticut to maintain vigilance in promoting teen safe driving, developing strong training and licensing standards and protecting public health.

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III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LAWS SUBCOMMITTEE

When the Task Force first convened in December 2007, it voted to form a Laws Subcommittee for Preliminary Legislative Recommendations. On January 25, 2008, the Task Force voted to make various recommendations to the Governor for immediate action to amend State laws pertaining to teen drivers between the ages of 16 and 17 years-old. These recommendations were integral to House Bill 5748, which passed both houses of the Connecticut General Assembly, and was signed into law by Governor Rell on April 21, 2008.

Highlights of the Task Force's first set of recommendations to Governor Rell are as follows:

- Extend the passenger restrictions for learner's permit holders and newly licensed drivers;
- Eliminate "youthful offender pleas" for moving violations;
- Increase penalties for 16 and 17-year-olds for driving under the influence and committing other moving violations;
- Create new suspensions for certain moving violations;
- Require that all passengers in all seats in any vehicle operated by a driver under the age of 20 wear seat belts;
- Increase behind-the-wheel training requirements for 16 and 17-year-olds from 20 hours to 50 hours;
- Extend the driving curfew from midnight to 11 p.m.

In addition, the Task Force later endorsed a provision to seize a teen's driver's license for certain violations for up to 48 hours for various violations under the Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws.

These [new laws](#) take effect on August 1, 2008.

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IV. TASK FORCE LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

(Note: The numbering does not set a priority, but allows for easy reference to a specific recommendation.)

1) RECOMMENDATION

The State should develop in partnership with relevant agencies, highway and traffic safety organizations, and professional educators a standardized, uniform, state-of-the-art curriculum for driver education. This curriculum should establish minimum content standards for classroom and behind-the-wheel training for 16 and 17 year-olds. The curriculum should apply to secondary and commercial schools and be offered at no charge for parents wishing to teach their teens at home. Distribution should be accomplished via the Internet with copies also available at the DMV. Development of the curriculum, a public comment period on the initial draft of the curriculum and completion of the final draft should be accomplished within a 12-month time frame.

Rationale: Currently, the minimum standards constituting proper classroom and behind-the-wheel training need clarification. Specific guidelines will aid both professional educators and parents, and help ensure uniformity in training within the State.

2) RECOMMENDATION

The State should develop and implement a youth-informed, culturally appropriate social marketing campaign that includes both public education and general deterrence messages. It should be based on State and national data that includes the following approaches:

Internet, including the newly created teen driving website; public service announcements utilizing actors and teen celebrities who have previously been featured in movies or promotions that glorify speed as spokespersons for responsible driving; radio and TV commercials/ads; billboards; public transit bus panels; high school newspapers and in-school media coverage; public service channels; DMV; groups with high school and hospital programs; sporting events; teen media contests; brochures placed in doctor's offices, insurance companies, driving schools, police stations, libraries, etc.

Rationale: Changes in public policy due to the alarming number of teen crashes require a sustained and comprehensive public education and awareness campaign to educate teens, parents, and the general population about the risks and responsibilities inherent to operating a motor vehicle. The long-term goal is to reduce morbidity and mortality rates among teen drivers and passengers. Traditional and innovative methods and mediums of social marketing must be utilized for the education and awareness of the target audience (teens and parents), as well as the general population.

3) RECOMMENDATION

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The State should develop training and education programs for law enforcement. It should work with the police agencies and schools to develop and coordinate high visibility enforcement strategies. Develop training and education programs for the law enforcement community to ensure full support for and participation in GDL law implementation. This includes work with police agencies to develop workable high visibility enforcement strategies to assure parent/guardian teen driver compliance with GDL and other traffic safety laws.

Such activities may include but not be limited to the following:

- Law enforcement education programs regarding GDL requirements and enforcement strategies (roll call, on line, and in service classroom education, and recruit training).
- Coordinate high visibility enforcement/paid media campaign during the worst months of the year for teen fatalities (July and October).
- Emphasis on teen drivers during NHTSA Occupant Protection (May) and Impaired Driving (September) campaigns.
- A GDL law card for law enforcement, parents, and teens.
- GDL information/videos on the DMV and high school Websites.
- Incentives for law enforcement to implement quarterly high school checkpoint programs (MA).
- Demonstration of parental notification programs for GDL violations (ME – phone calls and NC – letter).
- Procedures for implementation of a GDL ‘admin per se’ law.
- Establishment of standardized signage for displayed at/within high school parking lots encouraging compliance with all traffic. The signage should include the CT State seal.

Rationale: Enforcement of GDL restrictions is linked to effective high visibility enforcement of other traffic safety violations. Law officers enforcing safety belt, speeding, cell phone use and other traffic safety violations at locations and times where young drivers are most at risk are best positioned to enforce GDL restrictions as a secondary violation. Future application of vehicle identification technologies is under study and not available for use at the present time. As a result, extensive education and training is needed to ensure that the law enforcement community is prepared to enforce GDL laws in concert with existing primary traffic safety laws that apply to all drivers. A program of standardized signage at or near high school parking lots is also needed to assure continuing awareness of GDL requirements by parents/guardians, teen drivers, and the general public.

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4) RECOMMENDATION

Parents or legal guardians of drivers under age 18 should be promptly notified when law enforcement has issued a citation.

The State should study both: a) whether a parent/guardian should be notified promptly whenever law enforcement officer stops car driven by teen and deems conduct serious enough to issue written citation/ticket and b) whether a parent/guardian should be notified of convictions of moving violations by drivers under age 18.

Rationale: Parental supervision and oversight of the teen driving experience has been shown to be a critical factor in the success of GDL laws. Current protocols at the DMV do not provide parents with the opportunity to participate in the enforcement of GDL restrictions within the family. Parental notification should be instituted to assure teen driver awareness of and compliance with junior operator and other traffic safety laws.

5) RECOMMENDATION

The State should create and implement an on-going mechanism for using a data-driven process to develop, implement, and monitor a grassroots and statewide effort on safe teen driving.

Governor M. Jodi Rell should designate a Chief Adviser to oversee all aspects of Connecticut's Teen Safe Driving Program. The Chief Adviser should be responsible for the development, facilitation and oversight of a comprehensive statewide plan to guide implementation of Task Force recommendations and the creation of an on-going workgroup of national, State and local organizations. This workgroup should be charged with collaborating on grassroots and statewide initiatives and tracking and evaluating data on teen driving crashes, injuries and deaths. The workgroup should incorporate current research on teenage social norms, parental and public awareness, attitudes and brain development into their work.

Rationale: The alarming number of teen crashes in Connecticut and the difficulties of effectively reaching an ever-changing population require coordinated on-going efforts by all concerned parties at the federal, State and community levels. In order to ensure that all recommendations of the Governor's Task Force are implemented and maintained, a mechanism must be created with the proper authority and direction.

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6) RECOMMENDATION

The State and its partners in teen driving safety should work together to find a way to raise awareness of the types of technology available to track teen drivers. Examples include but are not limited to: global positioning systems; speed recorders; event data recorders; one-way cell phones (outgoing calls to 911 only; incoming from parents/guardians); on-board breathalyzers; seat belt ignition links and in vehicle cameras.

Rationale: A variety of different types of new technology available on the market today that can be effective in enhancing the safety of teen drivers. Additionally, like all technologies new developments and ideas are coming to the market all the time. Since the process of learning to drive is a one-time event for each teenager and not something parents and guardians would otherwise think about or be familiar with, it would be more efficient for the State to put together a document listing and explaining the various types of technologies available, updating it regularly and making this information available to the public.

7) RECOMMENDATION

The DMV should revise, modify and update the parents' manual, "How Parents Can Help Their Teens Become Safe Drivers," by working with teen driving safety advocates and existing resources available. The updated manual should be consistent with any new laws passed by the legislature and approaches decided by Governor Rell. Avenues should be explored to foster distribution. It should be available in Spanish and other prominent second languages spoken in Connecticut based upon current U. S. Census Data. It also should include, as a part of parent education programs, information on available technology, such as global positioning systems, speed recorders, event data recorders, on-board breathalyzers, in vehicle cameras and seat belt ignition. In addition, it should have information about matters related to safety features, age and performance of a vehicle.

Rationale: The parents' manual is a communication tool that affords the State a unique opportunity to speak directly to parents of soon-to-be and newly licensed teens about teen driving issues.

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8) RECOMMENDATION

All references to graduated license issues should be identified by the following designations:

- A. Learner's Permit: "Junior Operator Permit"*
- B. Operator's License prior to age 18: "Junior Operator's License"*

Rationale: Consistency in terminology is necessary to clarify definitions. The distinction between a Junior Operator's License and a full license underscores the State's position that junior operators will progress from license restrictions to full driving privileges with the passage of time and experience.

9) RECOMMENDATION

The DMV should require learner's permit applicants who are 16 and 17 years old to attend an orientation program with at least one parent or guardian. Content should include risks associated with teen driving, current graduated driver licensing laws and restrictions, potential State and civil penalties for failure to comply with traffic laws, the role of safety belts, impaired driving, and speeding in traffic crashes, safety ratings and crash experiences of vehicles, and information on monitoring devices. For home teaching/coaching opportunities, references to applicable standards and curricula should also be included. The DMV should also require that a detailed instruction log be provided to parents and legal guardians as a tool to document supervised driving time. The detailed instructional log should be completed and returned to the DMV. A warning, noting the penalties for falsifying training records when submitting the form to DMV at the time of the driving test, should be stated on it. The DMV should also make available a teen/parent driving agreement to foster improved communication and oversight of GDL requirements and safe driving behaviors

Rationale: Parents may not be fully aware of the risks and restrictions that affect teenage drivers under the age of 18.

10) RECOMMENDATION

DMV should develop a more comprehensive and uniform evaluation of licensees based on specific criteria for the behind the wheel exam. It should increase the number of written exam questions with a higher percentage of correct answers required to obtain a GDL.

Rationale: Increase the level of knowledge and skill required to pass a license examination, thereby ensuring a more skilled and knowledgeable teen driver. It is clear that many teen applicants study and practice only to the extent that they feel is necessary to pass test and become licensed.

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11) RECOMMENDATION

The State should create a separate Operator Retraining Program for Junior Operators, distinct from the adult program. Junior Operators would be mandated to attend this program following one (1) moving violation, infraction or offense, or any violation of the GDL provisions. Police enforcing these laws should offer no verbal warnings and must ticket all violators. This program should be operated under a standardized curriculum that is followed by all who provide driver education training, and subject to the same mandated inspections that are currently applied to other programs.

Rationale: Such a program would offer age-specific training for 16 and 17-year-olds, addressing issues of a teen's knowledge and skills, as well as his/her attitudes. Such an age-specific program would simplify enforcement and education efforts, and standardization would ensure consistency throughout the state.

12) RECOMMENDATION

State agencies with respective associations to education should work with middle schools and high schools to incorporate traffic safety information into health, science, and math curricula in order to influence attitudes, knowledge and behaviors regarding the safe operation of a motor vehicle; encourage the development and pilot testing of teen-based peer intervention, outreach and education programs related to modeling responsible driving behaviors; monitor the effectiveness of peer education programs nationwide as evaluated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and other national organizations.

Rationale: There is less than one hour in health education programs in some high schools today as it relates to teen driving. Little is known regarding the extent to which traffic safety information is incorporated into other courses. Traffic safety awareness needs to be initiated early to provide guidance for students. Such instruction would provide accumulative instructional material and data to continually increase the knowledge base as they progress into the age of licensure. The State also needs to take advantage of emerging "best practices" in the area of peer intervention, education and outreach.

13) RECOMMENDATION

All Governor's Task Force on Teen Driving recommendations should exercise due diligence in addressing the effects of legislation, materials, and all other matters relating to teen driving. Considerations should include, ensuring that all materials are culturally appropriate, widely distributed, consumer informed, and that all approaches are evidence based. Cultural sensitivity to our diverse community and fairness to all are key components to effectively implementing societal changes.

Rationale: This philosophy should be woven through all considerations of all proposals for addressing public policy issues, including teen driving.

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14) RECOMMENDATION

State agencies and their partners in teen safe driving should integrate teen driver safety messaging into existing wellness programs.

Rationale: Teen driver safety messages can and should be developed to take full advantage of existing networks of peers and respected adults, including, but not limited to, community and school based health centers, physicians, teachers and youth groups.

15) RECOMMENDATION

The State should extend the period during which 16 and 17 year-old drivers must hold a Learner's Permit before obtaining a "Junior Operator's License" from the current minimum of four months to a minimum of six months when instruction has been obtained from a licensed driving school and from the current minimum of six months to a minimum of eight months for home trained permit holders.

Rationale: Increasing the length of the Learner's Permit stage and increasing the hours of training and experience prior to obtaining a provisional license is important to consider as a strategy to help reduce crashes and fatalities among newly-licensed teen drivers. Phasing in of a license with the other comprehensive Graduated Driver Licensing elements is what makes GDL effective. Maintaining the differential between those who take and do not take driver's education provides incentive for enrolling teens in driver's education, which is proven to be more effective than parent training.

16) RECOMMENDATION

State agencies should review the scheduled January 2010 changes to Connecticut's laws regarding juvenile justice to ensure that they are consistent with teenage driving laws and Task Force recommendations.

Rationale: The Task Force has been informed that substantial changes in the administration of justice for juveniles, which includes 16 and 17 year olds, are to be implemented beginning January 2010. A review of those changes is beyond the scope of this report. However, the changes in the juvenile justice laws need to be reviewed to ensure that the deterrent and enforcement purposes of the teen driving laws are not undermined or compromised.

17) RECOMMENDATION

State agencies should improve the speed and accuracy of reporting by the Central Information Bureau (CIB) and the court system to DMV of conviction of teenage drivers so as to facilitate prompt suspension or other administrative action with respect to licenses.

Rationale: Under current statutes and regulations, an alleged 16 or 17-year old violator of Connecticut's driving laws may either plead guilty to that charge, at which time the

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conviction is reported to DMV by the CIB for appropriate action against the license, or the alleged violator receives a court date. If the matter goes to court and a conviction results, the court system notifies DMV, which takes whatever action is required.

There are several existing and potential problems in this system that require attention:

- A. Currently, it typically takes 60-90 days from the issuance of a ticket/citation to the reporting to DMV of a conviction, but the process can take longer if the ticket/citation contains inaccurate information (which must be manually researched by hand), the court date is continued, or a judge issues an order that conflict with DMV's procedures.
- B. If the law enforcement officer writes inaccurate or unreadable information on the citation, processing can be delayed or even be impossible.

With inexperienced teen drivers, these delays, especially with repeat offenders, are a serious public safety matter. Thus, the Task Force recommends that DMV, the Central Infractions Bureau, court staff, judges, and prosecutors identify ways to expedite the processing of tickets/citations issued to 16 and 17 year old drivers, and ensure that the license-enforcement actions are implemented as quickly as possible.

18) RECOMMENDATION

The General Assembly and the Governor's Office should ensure that DMV staff and prosecutors are provided with adequate staff and resources to implement and administer the increase in license suspensions that will result from adoption of the "suspension matrix."

Rationale: Adoption of the suspension matrix would result in more work for prosecutors, court staff, and DMV Driver Services. It is essential that these offices have adequate staff and resources to deal with this workload.

19) RECOMMENDATION

Collaboration should occur between the Chief Court Administrator and the Chief State's Attorney to educate judges, court staff, and prosecutors about safety risks of teen driving and the need for speed and accuracy in enforcement actions.

Rationale: In order to properly administer 2008 changes in the law and other Task Force recommendations, all interested groups – including the judicial branch - need to be more aware of Connecticut's teen safe driving problem, and statutory and regulatory changes.

20) RECOMMENDATION

State agencies with respective interests should work with law enforcement to find technological solutions to assist law enforcement identify vehicles driven by sixteen and seventeen year olds in a way that does not force traffic stops based solely on

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perception of the driver's age and does not put teens at risk of being targeted by other drivers based on that designation of being a teen driver.

Rationale: In conversations with law enforcement officers, it became evident that to enforce laws that require stopping and inspecting a vehicle and its occupants – evening curfew, passenger restrictions, seat belts, cell phone use – law enforcement needs a reason to stop the vehicle other than the perceived age of the driver. Constitutional and civil liberties protections do not allow for law enforcement to stop a vehicle based solely on the perception of the driver's age.

In response to this consideration, the Task Force deliberated the use of stickers (as is done in England), medallions or other visible means to indicate provisional driver license status to law enforcement. There are practical problems here, and, in the survey conducted for the Task Force, this proposal drew significant public opposition, in part because of fears of teen drivers being targeted.

The discussion then shifted to technological means, such vehicle identification numbers (VIN) embedded in license plates and available only to law enforcement officers, or global positioning systems (GPS)/radio frequency identification (RFID) installed in vehicles driven by teens. The Task Force did not reach a clear or technologically feasible answer to this issue. Therefore, the recommendation is that Connecticut continue to seek for technological innovations for law enforcement to identify vehicles driven by teen drivers so as to improve enforcement of these "required look in" types of restrictions.

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Final Report - Appendix May 2008

The following documents in this appendix can also be found online at <http://www.ct.gov/teendriving/finalreport2008>. This online directory will have associated links to view each item listed. This material will be available online only and will not be distributed with the final report per existing executive order from the Governor's Office to put material on online to reduce printing costs.

I. GOVERNOR'S NOVEMBER 2007 CHARGE TO TASK FORCE

- A. [Press Release from the Governor's Office \(11/28/07\)](#)

II. TEENAGE DRIVING IN CONNECTICUT, 2007-2008

- A. Statistical Presentations to the Task Force
 - 1. [David Preusser – December 2007](#)
 - 2. [James Hedlund – December 2007](#)

III. TASK FORCE MEETINGS, NOVEMBER 2007 TO MAY 2008

- A. [Full Task Force Meeting Dates and Minutes](#)
 - 1. [December 7, 2007](#)
 - 2. [January 11, 2008](#)
 - 3. [January 25, 2008](#)
 - 4. [February 15, 2008](#)
 - 5. [March 14, 2008](#)
 - 6. [April 4, 2008](#)

- B. [Task Force Subcommittee Meeting Dates and Minutes](#)
 - 1. Laws, Policies and Regulations
 - a. [February 15, 2008](#)
 - b. [March 7, 2008](#)
 - c. [March 20, 2008](#)
 - 2. Legislative Recommendations
 - a. [December 21, 2007](#)
 - 3. Parental and Public Awareness
 - a. [January 23, 2008](#)
 - b. [February 15, 2008](#)
 - c. [March 7, 2008](#)
 - d. [March 14, 2008](#)
 - 4. Public/Multicultural Health
 - a. [February 13, 2008](#)
 - b. [February 27, 2008](#)
 - c. [March 12, 2008](#)

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5. Training and Education
 - a. [January 16, 2008](#)
 - b. [February 11, 2008](#)
 - c. [March 3, 2008](#)
 - d. [March 17, 2008](#)

IV. STATEWIDE OPINION SURVEY, JANUARY 2008

- A. [Press Release from the Governor's Office \(1/21/08\)](#)
- B. [Survey Results](#)

V. PUBLIC ACT 08-32, AN ACT CONCERNING TEENAGE DRIVERS, IMPLEMENTING THE TASK FORCE'S SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. [Explanation of New Laws Effective August 1, 2008](#)
- B. [Text of sHB 5748, Signed by Governor Rell on April 21, 2008](#)

VI. DMV TEEN SAFE DRIVING CENTER

- A. [Press Release from Governor's Office](#)

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