

Governor's Task Force on Teen Safe Driving
Sub Committee on Parent and Public Awareness

Minutes for March 14, 2008 Meeting
Held at Travelers Claim University, 99 Lamberton Road, Windsor, CT
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attendance:

Co-Chair: Rose Marie Cipriano

Members present: Ray Gaulin, Sherry Chapman (via Phone), Susan Naide, Rob Willsey and Angie Byrne

Also present: Mario Damiata

Members not present: Yvette Bello, Stephanie Demchik-Pascual and Joe Cristalli (on leave)

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- Review continuation of the committee's long term proposals

Review of minutes from March 7, 2008 meeting held at the Connecticut Hospital Association, Wallingford, CT.

Rose Marie Cipriano shared a draft of the subcommittee final report with the various proposals renumbered and with placeholders for the rationales. Members worked jointly on crafting language to be included in the final report that expresses the subcommittee's rationale for supporting each recommendation. Members also reviewed draft rationales provided by Rob Willsey for why the subcommittee did not support the three proposals which were rejected.

During the discussion, members reviewed and made changes to the wording of proposals #5, #7 and #8.

The final subcommittee report is attached.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00PM.

Governor's Task Force on Teen Driving Safety

Sub Committee on Parent and Public Awareness

Co-Chairs: Yvette Bello and Rose Marie Cipriano

Members :

Sherry Chapman, Rob Willsey, Angie Byrne, Ray Gaulin, Susan Naide

Joe Cristalli and Stephanie Demchik-Pascual

Five public sub-committee meetings were held between January 23 and March 14, 2008.
(1/23; 2/1; 2/15; 3/7; 3/14)

The committee reviewed seven long term proposals, rejecting three and establishing more defined language as the committee felt appropriate to best implement improved safe driving among the 16-18 year old population in Connecticut.

THE COMMITTEE'S CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Provide for parent/guardians to be notified 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.

2. Develop a standardized, uniform, state of the art driver's education program, approved by the CT DMV and be instituted statewide. This program will be a required course of study for any junior operator (16-18 year old) prior to application.
 - (A) Whereas this program include a schedule of evening and/or weekend sessions and that all students of public, private, parochial, independent, vocational schools, as well as home schooled students will have access based upon geographical residence.
 - (B) Whereas a "Parent/Guardian Training" module be part of this training program.
 - (C) Whereas parents of all license applicants be required to complete the "Parent Training" module. This includes home trained license applicants.
 - (D) Whereas due diligence be applied to maintaining affordable and accessible training for licensed applicants and the parent/guardian training program. The cost should be approved by the CT DMV or appropriate governing agency

RATIONALE:

The state of Connecticut recognizes and accepts its responsibility to provide its new operations with comprehensive and appropriate driver education materials and

increased road experience in order to improve the abilities and skills of younger operators; thereby increasing the safety of the entire traveling public.

3. Work with state agencies 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:

The subcommittee is aware there are a variety of different types of new technology available on the market today that can be very 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.

4. Encourage local high schools to work with local police to institute a standard signage program at/within high school parking lots. Standardized signage should encourage compliance with all laws including passenger restrictions, cell phone restrictions and seat belt requirements. The signage should include the Connecticut state seal.

RATIONALE:

The subcommittee believes that signage at entrances and exits to all CT high school parking areas would help teens and parents/guardians to follow GDL and general driving laws. Consistent signage from the state would remind and reinforce good practice and adherence to state laws such as: buckle up; no cell phone use driving; adherence to GDL passenger restrictions; and curfew limitations.

5. A. A chief adviser position is created to oversee all aspects of youth driving.

B. This position would provide oversight of a coalition, commission or Governor's Advisory group to implement the long term goals of the governor's Task Force on teen driving safety.

RATIONALE:

The subcommittee believes that due to the alarming number of teen crashes effecting this ever-changing population it is important to ensure that all elements of the states teen driving safety program are maintained.

6. Parent Manual Revision Recommendation:

A. Revise, modify and update the CT DMV 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.

B. Offer the manual in other languages.

C. 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.

D. Include vehicle consideration which includes safety features, age of vehicle and performance.

RATIONALE:

The DMV Handbook 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.

7. The state develops and implements a public awareness program that includes both public education and general deterrence messages that would utilize the following methods and include but not limited to:

A. Internet, including the newly created teen driving website; Public Service announcements utilizing actors and teen celebrities featured in movies or promotions that glorify speed; Radio & TV commercials/ads; Billboards; Public Transit Bus panel; high school newspapers & in school media coverage; public service channels; DMV; groups out there with high school and hospital programs; sporting events; Teen media contests; brochures (placed in doctor offices, insurance companies, DMV, driving schools, police stations, libraries, etc.

B. Possible slogans for quick recognition:

Learn to Live

Drive Smart

Drive to Stay Alive

Keep Your Keys

FREAC (Fast Response to Ending Adolescent Crashes)

ENOUGH – CT just got tough

RPM to RIP in 6 seconds

RATIONALE:

Due to the alarming number of teen crashes, as well as changes in public policy, the subcommittee recognizes a need for a sustained and comprehensive public education and awareness campaign for teens, parents, and the general population. Traditional methods and mediums of social marketing delivery as well as innovative methods for education and awareness must be utilized in order to reach both the target and general population.

8. All references to graduated license issues are identified by the following designations:

A. Learner’s Permit: Junior Operator’s Permit

B. Young Operators License: Junior Operator's License

RATIONALE:

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AND PARENTAL AWARENESS

RATIONALES FOR DECISIONS

Rejected Proposals:

- #2 Require all teenage applicants for learner's permit to file with DMV signed "Parent-Teen Driving Contract" – using Connecticut Teen Partnership contract as model.

Rationale: The subcommittee likes the idea of a Parent-Teen Driving Contract as its use likely will enhance the commitment both teens and their parents will make to ensuring the teens' safety while driving. However, the subcommittee does not agree with making the filing of this contract with DMV a requirement for a couple reasons. First, making this a DMV requirement may tend to diminish the actual effectiveness of its use – turning it into just more "paperwork". Second, filing the contract with DMV would seem to cause unnecessary legal confusion as the "contract" is only intended to be binding among the actual parties to the contract and not to anyone else.

- #3 Allow parents/guardians to initiate/obtain license suspensions or revocations for drivers under age 18.

Rationale: While the subcommittee feels the role of parents/guardians in the driving safety of their teens is important and that there may be occasions when the teens' drivers license or car keys should be taken away, it feels this is best accomplished by the parents or guardians actually confiscating the license or keys themselves rather than canceling the license at the DMV. Several concerns were identified with a parent or guardian canceling the license at DMV – this could create intra-family conflict, the practice could be abused by a capricious parent or in divorce situations, it isn't clear what the consequence would be if the teen is caught driving anyway, it may have the unintended effect of increasing

insurance costs to the family and it may be difficult for DMV to administer effectively.

- #7 Require 16 and 17 year old drivers to prominently display an identifying windshield sticker when they are operating a vehicle (as required in England).

Rationale: The subcommittee recognizes that law enforcement has significant difficulty in enforcing graduated licensing laws because the officer cannot be certain the driver is subject to these laws until the officer actually stops the vehicle and checks the driver's license and also recognizes that use of identifying stickers could improve law enforcement's ability to enforce these laws. However, the subcommittee is concerned that the use of identifying stickers can actually make the teens vulnerable from a safety standpoint since the stickers identify the vehicle as containing young teenagers.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Marie Cipriano