

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Governor's Task Force on Teen Safe Driving

Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: January 25, 2008

Time: 10 a.m.

Place: Legislative Office Building, Hartford, Room 1B

Task force members present: Commissioner Robert M. Ward (Co-Chairman), Charles Hollis, Stephen Simalchik, Robert L. Willsey, Yvette Bello, Mario Damiata, Joseph Cristalli, Timothy S. Hollister, Brendan T. Campbell, M.D., Albert S. Dabrowski, Sherry Chapman, Rose Marie Cipriano, Dr. Jack Thaw, Susan Naide, Gillian Mosier

Task force members absent: Commissioner J. Robert Galvin, M.D. (Co-Chairman), Paula Burchard, Lt. Col. Peter R. Terenzi, Chief James Rio, Jim MacPherson, Bill Ciotto, Stephanie Demchik-Pascual

Others present: Deputy Commissioner Dr. Norma Gyle (Department of Public Health), Maria Cruz (Big A Driving School), Sgt. Michael Jagova (State Police), Lt. Bill Tyler (Farmington PD), Kevin Borrup (on behalf of Dr. Campbell).

Proceedings:

1) Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Co-Chair Ward. Co-Chair Ward welcomed Deputy Commissioner Norma Gyle of the state Department of Public Health, who sat in for Co-Chair Dr. J. Robert Galvin.

The Task Force briefly discussed the issue of voting during a meeting. The Task Force agreed that any member not present for a vote may designate someone to sit in their place. In addition, that person may vote for the Task Force member during this meeting and future votes.

2) Presentation by Dr. James Hedlund on survey results on parental and public attitudes toward teen driving.

Dr. Hedlund gave an overview of a survey done by the Preusser Research Group, Inc. The survey studied the views of Connecticut parents and the general public on teen driving initiatives being considered by the Task Force. The survey was conducted the week of Jan. 7, 2008 and respondents were selected at random. Dr. Hedlund said that based on survey results, the people of Connecticut are very aware of these issues. More details of the survey were distributed at the meeting.

Respondents selected at random were:

- 398 parents of teens ages 15, 16 and 17.
- 409 other adults age 18 and older.

The overall results of the survey showed there was a majority of support from both parents and others for:

- Increased supervised driving hours.
- Longer learner's permit period.
- Longer passenger restriction period.
- Increased penalties for multiple moving violations.

In addition, about half of both parents and others support:

- Earlier nighttime restriction.
- Increased learner's permit age.

Also, fewer than half supported stickers to identify novice driver's cars, according to the survey results.

3) Presentation by the Department of Motor Vehicles on recordkeeping of driver violations.

Kathleen Flanagan-Beal and Susan Archambault, both of the Department of Motor Vehicles, gave the Task Force an overview of how the agency keeps records of driver violations.

The presentation included:

- The process of how violation convictions are reported to DMV.
- How long moving violations stay on a driving record.
 - Varies depending on the type of offense.
- A summary of the operator retraining program.
 - Drivers who are 24 and under convicted of two moving violations are required to attend the program.
 - Drivers who are 25 and older convicted of a third moving violation are required to attend the program.
- Possession of alcohol convictions regarding teens
- How youthful offender status impacts recordkeeping.
- An overview of what is on a driving record/how it is structured
- DMV Administrative Per Se process for a drunk driving arrest.
- Judicial penalties
- Violations of passenger/hour restrictions

4) Consideration and vote on short-term recommendations by task force's legislative sub-committee.

The Task Force discussed each of the seven proposed recommendations that were presented at the meeting on January 11. Since the seven proposals were already on the agenda, Co-Chair Ward said that a motion was in place to approve each recommendation.

As a matter of procedure, Co-Chair Ward said that any recommendation that has no objection would be placed on a Consent Calendar. One vote would take place for all the recommendations placed on the Consent Calendar. Each proposal was discussed separately:

1) **Eliminate "youthful offender" pleas for moving violations.** The Task Force agreed to put this recommendation on the Consent Calendar.

2) **Strengthen penalties under the "Administrative Per Se" program for teenage drivers who fail alcohol, drug, or urine tests.** The Task Force agreed to put this recommendation on the Consent Calendar.

3) **Amend Conn. Gen. Stat. § 14-36g(a)(4) [part of GDL requirements] to require (a) that all passengers in all seats in any vehicle operated by a driver under age 20 wear seat belts; and (b) increase penalties for drivers 16 – 19 years old who do not wear their seat belt, to provide for points toward license suspension/revocation.** The Task Force agreed to put this recommendation on the Consent Calendar.

4) **Revise passenger restrictions for 16 – 19 year olds to sequential periods as follows:**

- (a) **During the entire period that a teenage driver holds a learner's permit, except for students who are in the vehicle as part of driving school or driver education instruction, and the instructor, no passengers are permitted except a parent or guardian who is supervising the driver.**
- (b) **For first six months after a teenage driver progresses from a learner's permit to a provisional/intermediate license, no passengers except parent/guardian or one licensed driver over 20, licensed for four years or more, license currently valid.**
- (c) **For next six months, add to allowable passengers immediate family members, no others.**

The Task Force agreed to put this recommendation was placed on the Consent Calendar. A language change was made in the first sentence. The Task Force agreed to *eliminate* "16-19 year olds" and *replace it* with "current GDL laws."

5) **Increase the penalties for moving violations committed by teenage drivers using as a model the Massachusetts' newly-adopted matrix.** This item was *not* placed on the Consent Calendar.

6) **As soon as this can be accomplished administratively, increase the learner's permit period of required, supervised driver training/practice from the current 20 hours to 50 hours.** The Task Force agreed to put this recommendation was placed on the Consent Calendar.

7) **Amend night time driving curfew for drivers 18 and younger from midnight to 10:00 p.m.; retain current exceptions.** Stephen Simalchik spoke out and said a 10 p.m. curfew was too extreme for high school students. This item was *not* placed on the Consent Calendar.

Co-Chair Ward called for a roll call vote on the recommendations placed on the Consent Calendar. The following Task Force members voted by proxy: Dr. J Robert Galvin, Lt. Col. Peter R. Terenzi and Chief James Rio. *Listed below is the final vote tally for items placed on the Consent Calendar.*

TOTALS	Voting	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent and Not Voting
	19	19	0	0	3

Name	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Co-Chair Robert M. Ward	X			
Co-Chair J. Robert Galvin	X			
Yvette Bello	X			
Maria Cruz	X			
Brendan T. Campbell	X			
Sherry Chapman	X			
Bill Ciotto				X
Rose Marie Cipriano	X			
Joseph Cristalli	X			
Albert S. Dabrowski	X			
Mario Damiata	X			
Stephanie Demchik-Pascual				X
Charles Hollis	X			
Timothy S. Hollister	X			
Jim MacPherson				X
Gillian Mosier	X			
Susan Naide	X			
James Rio	X			
Stephen Simalchik	X			
Peter R. Terenzi	X			
Jack Thaw	X			
Robert L. Willsey	X			
TOTAL	19	0	0	3

Discussion continued on proposal No. 7 regarding nighttime driving restrictions. Co-Chair Ward said that the final proposal sent to the Governor’s Office would include the exceptions in the current law. Rose Marie Cipriano made a motion to amend the recommendation from “10 p.m.” to “11 p.m.” Albert S. Dabrowski seconded the motion.

In addition, the Task Force agreed on a language change: “drivers 18 and younger” be changed to “drivers under 18.” Mr. Hollister, chairman of the task force’s Laws, Policies and Regulations subcommittee, agreed that was the intent of the proposal made by subcommittee.

Co-Chair Ward called for a roll call vote to change the language from “10 p.m.” to “11 p.m.” The following Task Force members voted by proxy: Dr. J Robert Galvin, Lt. Col. Peter R. Terenzi and Chief James Rio. *Listed below is the final vote tally for the amendment to proposal No. 7 to change the time from “10 p.m.” to “11 p.m.”*

TOTALS	Voting	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent and Not Voting
	19	10	9	0	3

Name	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Co-Chair Robert M. Ward	X			
Co-Chair J. Robert Galvin		X		
Yvette Bello	X			
Maria Cruz		X		
Brendan T. Campbell		X		
Sherry Chapman		X		
Bill Ciotto				X
Rose Marie Cipriano	X			
Joseph Cristalli		X		
Albert S. Dabrowski	X			
Mario Damiata		X		
Stephanie Demchik-Pascual				X
Charles Hollis	X			
Timothy S. Hollister		X		
Jim MacPherson				X
Gillian Mosier		X		
Susan Naide	X			
James Rio	X			
Stephen Simalchik	X			
Peter R. Terenzi		X		
Jack Thaw	X			
Robert L. Willsey	X			
TOTAL	10	9	0	3

The Task Force agreed to amend proposal No. 7. Co-Chair Ward called for a roll call vote on the amended proposal. The following Task Force members voted by proxy: Dr. J Robert Galvin, Lt. Col. Peter R. Terenzi and Chief James Rio. *Listed below is the final vote tally on proposal No. 7 as amended.*

TOTALS	Voting	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent and Not Voting
	19	19	0	0	3

Name	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Co-Chair Robert M. Ward	X			
Co-Chair J. Robert Galvin	X			
Yvette Bello	X			
Maria Cruz	X			
Brendan T. Campbell	X			
Sherry Chapman	X			
Bill Ciotto				X
Rose Marie Cipriano	X			
Joseph Cristalli	X			

Albert S. Dabrowski	X			
Mario Damiata	X			
Stephanie Demchik-Pascual				X
Charles Hollis	X			
Timothy S. Hollister	X			
Jim MacPherson				X
Gillian Mosier	X			
Susan Naide	X			
James Rio	X			
Stephen Simalchik	X			
Peter R. Terenzi	X			
Jack Thaw	X			
Robert L. Willsey	X			
TOTAL	19	0	0	3

The Task Force discussed proposal No. 5. Gillian Mosier said that there should be some parental/guardian involvement after a second offense. Co-Chair Ward offered a “friendly amendment” that within the approved recommendation, include a provision with the driver retraining program to mandate that the parent or guardian of a teenager must sign-off on the reinstatement of teen driver’s license reinstatement form. The form must be presented to DMV at the time of reinstatement. No one on the Task Force objected to the amendment.

Co-Chair Ward called for a roll call vote on proposal No. 5. The following Task Force members voted by proxy: Dr. J Robert Galvin, Lt. Col. Peter R. Terenzi, Chief James Rio and Brendan T. Campbell, M.D. *Listed below is the final vote tally on proposal No. 5.*

TOTALS	Voting	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent and Not Voting
	19	19	0	0	3

Name	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Co-Chair Robert M. Ward	X			
Co-Chair J. Robert Galvin	X			
Yvette Bello	X			
Maria Cruz	X			
Brendan T. Campbell	X			
Sherry Chapman	X			
Bill Ciotto				X
Rose Marie Cipriano	X			
Joseph Cristalli	X			
Albert S. Dabrowski	X			
Mario Damiata	X			
Stephanie Demchik-Pascual				X

Charles Hollis	X			
Timothy S. Hollister	X			
Jim MacPherson				X
Gillian Mosier	X			
Susan Naide	X			
James Rio	X			
Stephen Simalchik	X			
Peter R. Terenzi	X			
Jack Thaw	X			
Robert L. Willsey	X			
TOTAL	19	0	0	3

Co-Chair Ward thanked the Task Force members for their hard work on crafting the short-term recommendations.

5) Reports from task force’s subcommittees.

- Training and Education
 - i. Gillian Mosier, co-chair of the subcommittee, reported.
 1. She said the subcommittee is looking for membership. In addition, she said the subcommittee was looking for more information non-profit educational material, and the subcommittee would like to create a brochure on non-profit educational opportunities. In addition:
 - a. The subcommittee was studying the idea of randomizing the on-the-road test given to students by DMV; and the concept of computer training.
 - b. The subcommittee would like Task Force member Mario Damiata to come speak at a meeting.
- Public and Parental Awareness
 - i. Rose Marie Cipriano, co-chair of the subcommittee, reported.
 1. The next meeting of the subcommittee will be Feb.1.
 2. The subcommittee looked at the several issues at its first meeting on Jan.23:
 - a. The subcommittee supported unanimously parent/guardians to be notified of moving violations by teens under 18.
 - b. All teenage applicants to file with DMV a teen-parent “partnership contract,” but the subcommittee said it would be too difficult to implement.
 - c. Allow parents/guardians to initiate a driver’s license suspension of a teen under 18. This was still under discussion.
 3. There was an immediate short-term recommendation made to the full task force -- ask high schools across the state to hold a 30-minute assembly, done by the school administrators, which should include a review the current

teen driving restrictions, results of the teen driving survey discussed at this meeting, and the task force's short and long-term recommendations. The task force agreed to this recommendation, and that schools should hold the assemblies in the next 60 days.

- Law, Policies and Regulations
 - i. Tim Hollister, the subcommittee chair, reported.
 1. The subcommittee has not met since the last meeting.
 2. Mr. Hollister asked how the subcommittee should proceed now that the short-term recommendations have been approved. Co-Chair Ward explained the process.
- Creation of subcommittee on Public Health Issues and Teen Driving
 - i. Chief James Rio will chair this subcommittee, which has yet to meet. If a task force member is interesting in joining the subcommittee, he or she should contact Chief Rio.

6) Scheduling of public forums

The task force will hold its first public forum on January 31 at the Rocky Hill Town Hall in Rocky Hill, Conn., at 7 p.m. Future meetings were to be planned in the New Haven area, Eastern Connecticut and the Danbury area.

7) Other Business

The next full task force meeting will be on February 15, 2008. Future full task force meetings have been scheduled for March 14 and April 4.

8) Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.