

## **Governor's Task Force on Teen Driving**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting date: April 4, 2008**

**Time: 10:30 a.m.**

**Place: Legislative Office Building, Hartford, Room 2D**

*Task force members present:* Commissioner J. Robert Galvin (Co-Chairman), Commissioner Robert M. Ward (Co-Chairman), Charles Hollis, Robert L. Willsey, Yvette Bello, Maria Cruz, Mario Damiat, Dianne Harnad, Timothy S. Hollister, Brendan T. Campbell, M.D., Sherry Chapman, Rose Marie Cipriano, Susan Naide, Gillian Mosier, Stephanie Demchik-Pascual, Joseph Cristalli, Chief James Rio

*Task force members absent:* Dr. Jack Thaw, Stephen Simalchik, Albert S. Dabrowski, Bill Ciotto, Lt. Col. Peter Terenzi, Jim MacPherson

*Others present:* Dr. David Preusser, Sgt. Robert Grega (CT State Police)

#### **Proceedings:**

##### **1) Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 10:41 a.m. by Co-Chair Ward.

##### **2) Governor's Radio Ad and "TALK to Teen Driver's Night"**

Co-Chair Ward explained the purpose of the event, which is a statewide movement to raise awareness about the issue of teen driving and encourage parents to bring. The event is planned. Governor Rell recorded a public service announcement to encourage parents to discuss driving issue with their teenage children. The public service announcement will air from March 26 to April 26 and will be played on radio stations across the state. The target audience was parents, and the cost was about \$70,000 and will be paid for by a grant from the State Department of Transportation.

##### **3) Meeting with Chief Court Administrator and Vehicle Identification Issues**

This item was moved further down on the agenda to be combined with the subcommittee reports.

##### **4) Update on Teen Driving Bill in Legislature**

Co-Chair Ward said the Bill was approved by the Judiciary Committee and some changes were made. The final language has not been released by the Legislative Commissioner's Office. However, Co-Chair Ward explained some of the changes that

were made. It is likely to be taken up in the State House of Representatives next week. Changes included:

- The administrative license suspension for a 16 or 17-year-old was increased from 12 months to 18 months.
- The restoration fee to reinstate a driver's license suspension for a second offense of violating a GDL law was decreased from \$250 to \$125. The restoration fee following a driver's license suspension is currently \$125.
- The provision to suspend a teen driver's license for 48 hours following the violation of certain laws was changed from permissive to mandatory. Co-Char Ward said the final language would be needed to be seen to get a firm understanding of the intent of the change.
- Added provisions to the "youthful offender status" aspects of the bill, but the final language still needed to be seen.

#### **5) Acceptance of Subcommittee Proposed Recommendations to Task Force**

The Task Force went over its 20 proposed recommendations. The recommendations are available for viewing on the Task Force's web site at [www.ct.gov/teendriving](http://www.ct.gov/teendriving).

Diane Harnad offered an explanation to one of the recommendations her subcommittee drafted. She said was an over-arching, guiding recommendation that should be embedded in all the recommendations. Essentially, the recommendations should consider the challenges of society, financial backgrounds, and should recognize the diversity of everyone who would be impacted by the proposals.

Tim Hollister commented on recommendations 16, 17, 18 and 19. These relate to reviewing the changes in the juvenile justice law that are scheduled to take place in 2010, to improve the speed and accuracy of reporting of driver violations to DMV from the Central Infractions Bureau and court system, to ensure DMV, state's attorney and court staff sufficient resources, and to work with the Chief Court Administrator and Chief State's Attorney to educate staff about the appropriate issues relating to teen driving.

Sue Naide and Mr. Hollister met with the Chief Court Administrator this week. It was reported that Chief Court Administrator was supportive of all the recommendations.

In addition, the issue of vehicle identification where law enforcement has to look-in to the vehicle to enforce GDL laws. Tim said he understands the concern from law enforcement that they are being asked to enforce laws without the proper tools to enforce the laws. Recommendation 20 states that there is no solution for the vehicle identification issue, but a solution is needed and it must be addressed.

Chief Rio also clarified that law enforcement has direct access to immediate driver histories.

The two-hour requirement for parents to attend a driving school class will be included in the current eight-hour course already required for all teen drivers.

Rose Marie Cipriano commented on recommendations 1 and 2 as they relate to parent and teen driver education.

Chief Rio commented on the "zero tolerance" language in recommendation. He said taking away discretion for an officer would be difficult to mandate.

There was discussion on the Operator Retraining program and how it could be improved.

Rose Marie Cipriano asked about the “cutoff” for complying with the proposed legislation regarding the requirement for 40-hours of on-the-road training. She asked about the students who have already completed the previously required 20 hours. It was brought up at the Weston High School assembly. David Preusser said other states have grandfathered students that already had begun training. Sue Naide suggested tightening the language to make it less vague – use the phrase “applied (for the learner’s permit) for by” or “issued by.”

Co-Chair Ward made a motion was made to recommend to the Governor and General Assembly that the education requirement be effective August 1 for all individuals who had not been issued a learner’s permit by August 1. Co-Chair Ward made said that the language may be tweaked, but the cutoff time would be firm and clear. The motion was passed without opposition and without a roll call vote.

Maria Cruz said there should be punitive action on parents who knowingly lie on an application to show training requirements. Co-Chair Ward said that a Task Force member would be free to make an amendment to the recommendation at the next Task Force meeting.

## **6) Next Steps**

Co-Chair Ward announced several “conference committees” to address specific recommendations that overlapped in purpose. The committees would further flush out the recommendations that have more than one option to consider.

The conference committees announced and agreed upon to review the following recommendations are:

- For Recommendation 1
  - Task Force members to serve are: Jim MacPherson, Sherry Chapman, Stephen Simalchik.
- For Recommendation 2
  - Task Force members to serve are: Yvette Bello, Chief Rio and Maria Cruz.
- For Recommendation 3
  - Task Force members to serve are: Mario Damiata, Rose Marie Cipriano, Joe Cristalli.
- For Recommendation 4
  - Task Force members to serve are: Sue Naide, Brendan Campbell and Lt. Col. Terenzi.
- For Recommendation 5
  - Task Force members to serve are: Robert Willsey, Diane Harnad and Charles Hollis.

A motion was made to approve the committee assignments, the motion was seconded by Tim Hollister. Meetings may be held electronically or by telephone. Any changes should be submitted by April 21.

Mario Damiata asked about how the final draft of the recommendations would be formatted. He mentioned the Task Force might be interested in reviewing a similar New Jersey report for ideas.

Tim Hollister, Yvette Bello, staff members from the Department of Public Health and Department of Motor Vehicles will work together to put together the final report. There was no objection to that being the drafting committee.

The next full task force meeting will be sometime in mid-May.

**7) Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.