

## Strategic Communications Plan: Advocacy for Cell Phone Ban in State of Massachusetts

**Goal:** To depart from the safety frame of those in support of cell phone ban by substituting the security frame. This will evoke a stronger core value in order to gain more public support among the Massachusetts citizens and legislators to pass the hands-free cell phone bill.

**Objectives:** To achieve goal.

1. Shift to security frame by stating that distracted cell phone drivers take away the freedom and security of other drivers on the road by endangering their lives. Move away from the safety frame value that decreasing distracted cell phone drivers will decrease accidents and improve safety on the roadways.
2. Utilize more imagery of car accidents and emotional individual stories of grieving citizens who have lost people to distracted cell phone drivers and less of public health campaigns for safety belts or concerned researchers.
3. Emphasize that this bill is necessary to protect the public's welfare and security in order to maintain citizen's freedoms to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

**Messages:** 1-3 per Objective

For Objective 1:

- a. Distracted cell phone drivers take away the freedom and security of other drivers on the road by endangering their lives.
- b. It strips us of our freedom to be secure on public roadways when distracted cell phone drivers are allowed to put us in the way of harm because of their dangerous driving.

For Objective 2:

Katherine Church  
Boston University School of Public Health

- a. We cannot afford to wait any longer for this bill to pass while innocent lives are being taken in car crashes caused by distracted cell phone drivers.
- b. No parent should have to lose their child to a distracted cell phone driver. This dangerous practice is a threat to their right to life together.
- c. It's been proven by research: Innocent lives are being taken as a result of distracted cell phone drivers causing horrible car accidents.

For Objective 3:

- a. We must enact this hands-free cell phone bill in order to prevent the roadway accidents that steal our right drive freely without endangering our lives.
- b. This hands-free cell phone bill is essential to ensure the security of our citizens on the public roadways by preventing unnecessary dangerous driving practices.

**Target Audience and Audience Profile:**

This bill is in the Joint Commission on Transportation, so the target audience will be the democratic leadership for the Joint Commission on Transportation (e.g. chairs and co-chairs in the House and Senate on the commission). The profile of this target audience includes legislators:

**Steven Baddour:** Steven is the Senate chair of the Joint Commission. The district that he represents is First Essex, which includes: Haverhill, Newburyport, Amesbury, Merrimac, Methuen, North Andover, and Salisbury. He attended the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth and received his J.D. from the Massachusetts School of Law. His current profession is an attorney and he has served on the Senate since 2002. The organizations he belongs to include the Son's of Italy, Lodge #902, and the Methuen Historical Society.

Katherine Church  
Boston University School of Public Health

**Jennifer Flannigan:** Jennifer is the Senate vice-chair of the Joint Commission. The district that she serves is Worcester and Middlesex: Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Sterling and Westminster, within the county of Worcester; and Ashby and Townsend, within the county of Middlesex. Jennifer received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and attended Fitchburg State College where she received her Master in Mental Health Counseling. She is a legislator for her profession, serving the House from 2005 to 2009 and then the Senate from 2009 to the present. The organizations that she participates in include the Boys and Girls Club of North Central Massachusetts, Project Apples, Spanish American Center, Montachusett Addiction Council, Junior Achievement of Central Massachusetts, and Leominster Education Foundation.

**Joseph Wagner:** Joseph is the House Representative chair of the Joint Commission. He represents the Eighth Hampden district which consists of several precincts in the city of Chicopee, within the county of Hampden. He received his education from the Western New England College for undergraduate and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for professional school. His current profession is a Legislator, in which he has served in the house since 1991. The organizations he belongs to currently are the Chicopee Boys and Girls Club in which he is on the Board of Directors, and Elks. He also holds public office on the Chicopee Democratic City Committee, is Chicopee Civil Defense Director, and was Administrative Assistant to Mayor of Chicopee (1988-1991).

**Carl Sciortino:** Carl is the House Representative vice-chair of the Joint Commission. The district he represents is Thirty-Fourth Middlesex which includes precincts from the city of Medford, and precincts from the city of Somerville, both in the county of Middlesex. He

Katherine Church  
Boston University School of Public Health

received his B.S. in Biology from Tufts University. His current profession is legislator, serving Massachusetts since 2005. The organizations he belongs to are the Progressive Democrats of Somerville, Sierra Club, Massachusetts Chapter national Organization for Women, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and is vice-chair of the Medford Democratic City Committee.

**Communication Channel:** To reach target audience.

This target audience will be the most efficient for targeting the campaign because they control whether the bill passes, so it is important to aim campaign efforts where it will make the most difference in terms of action to pass legislation. This makes the utilization of the leaderships' districts' local media essential in order to encourage the assumption by legislators that this is an issue of their district, and thus an issue affecting the amount of public support they will maintain for future re-election. To target **Steven Baddour** news materials should be sent to the Haverhill Gazette, the Daily News of Newburyport, the Newburyport Current, Amesbury News, and the North Andover Eagle-Tribune. To target **Jennifer Flannigan** news materials should be sent to the Fitchburg Pride, the Fitchburg Sentinel and Enterprise, radio station WCAI FM 90.1 of Fitchburg, the Gardner News, GreaterGardner.net, the Leominster Champion, the Bolton Common, the Clinton Item, the Times & Courier of Lancaster & Clinton, Worcester Magazine, Worcester Business Journal, Worcester radio stations WCRN AM 830 and WICN FM 90.5, Worcester Telegram and Gazette, and the Townsend Times. To target **Joseph Wagner's** district city of Chicopee news materials should be sent to the Chicopee Herald Weekly and the Chicopee Register. To target **Carl Sciortino's** district cities (e.g. Medford and Somerville) news materials should be sent to the Medford Transcript, Tufts Daily of the University, the Somerville Journal, and the Somerville News.

It will also be important to target the media for the greater city of Boston, Massachusetts home to the State House. This is important because it is an additional outlet that legislators utilize to stay updated on the issues. It is important to choose media outlets that legislators are likely to look in regarding public opinion on the cell phone debate. Consequently, it would be sufficient to include popular newspapers such as the Boston Herald, Boston Magazine, Boston Business Journal, and the Boston Globe. Other media outlets to include in press releases, media alerts, op-eds, and public opinion writing would be the New England Cable News, and any of the cities' broadcasting stations: WWZN AM 1510, WUNI TV 27 (Univision), WUMB FM 91.9, WTKK FM 96.9, WSBK TV 38, WLVI TV 56 (CW), WHDH TV 7 (NBC), WGBX TV 44 (PBS), WGBH TV 2 (PBS), WGBH FM 89.7, WFXT TV 25 (Fox), WEEI AM 850, WCVB TV 5 (ABC), WCRB FM 99.5, WBZ TV 4 (CBS), WBZ AM 1030, WBUR FM 90.9, or WAMG AM 890.

Reporters on this topic would also need to be contacted in order to further target leadership by focusing on the greater city of Boston. For the Boston Globe, Noah Bierman would be the reporter to target, as he wrote the majority of the cell phone bill debate articles selected for the recent framing memo analysis. The Boston Herald articles are generally covered by associated press, so it may be most beneficial to send press releases to their Local Coverage department under which the cell phone bill articles are listed. There are also several local Boston news radio stations that could be utilized:

**Activities:** Media event, press conference, media alert.

A **media event** will be held regarding the vast amount of car accidents that result from distracted cell phone drivers. Imagery that will be used to capture additional media attention will be based

Katherine Church  
Boston University School of Public Health

on statistics of the number of crashes in a year in Massachusetts that distracted cell phone drivers cause. For each crash, one cross will be posted in the lawn of the Boston Common public ground to represent each potential or actual life lost from cell phone use while driving. This will emphasize the dramatic number. A sign will be posted also describing what the scene represents, and will list the statistic used (crashes per year caused by distracted cell phone drivers in Massachusetts) and its appropriate research citation according to the Crash Data Information on MassDot

(<http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/traffic/crashrateeval&sid=about>).

All protestors will wear black as if in grievance of the deaths caused by distracted cell phone drivers. They will hold signs that include the phrases listed above in the message section, and chant phrases such as, “Secure our roads!” or “Hands-Free! Protect our security!” There will also be signs suggesting supporting the bill (SB1906) and the phone number of the House Staff (617) 722-2400 and Senate Staff (617) 722-1604, so that people can immediately contact the legislation urging them to support the bill’s passing.

It should be held around one of the big driving holiday weekends like Memorial Day Weekend or Labor Day Weekend on that holiday Monday to commemorate the importance of driver security on the road during a time when thousands of families travel together by car. It could potentially last an entire afternoon, but should be scheduled to allow a 45 minute **press conference** to occur prior to dusk. At the press conference there will be several speakers chosen to best deliver the image and message of the core value of security. This will include the mother from several of the articles in the Boston Globe who lost her teenage daughter to a car crash caused by texting while driving, a public health figure who can testify to the research behind the

dangers of cell phone driving e.g. the Massachusetts Commissioner of Transportation or head of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (but stay focused on the security frame *not safety*), and a highway patrol officer who can attest to the vast devastation from car accidents caused by distracted cell phone drivers and the consequences witnessed.

To achieve more public support within the community, the coalition collaborative that is in support of the bill will send out a **media alert** regarding the media event and press conference with information on who, what, where, when, why and how to help (e.g. write or call the Joint Commission on Transportation leadership; support the demonstration by joining or donating materials; or write letters to the editor of their local paper). It will also go to the offices of the legislator leadership on the transportation commission specifically, so that they are aware of the growing campaign in support of the bill and the necessity to attend to this issue.

**Materials:**

- Signs/Posters
- Black Sharpee Markers
- Extra black clothing
- Donations of cardboard boxes for making crosses
- Food/Drink for demonstrators
- Flyers for Media Event with details (who, what, where, when, why).
- Press releases to local media and Boston city media RE: Media Event.
- Microphone for press conference speakers
- Permit for demonstration on Boston Common.
- Letters to the editor
- Media Kit: who introduced the bill and its description, fact sheet that includes statistics and research background for bill with special regards to the security frame, contact information on collaborations supporting the bill, and other pertinent information regarding support or supporters of the bill and how cell phone drivers endanger the security of other drivers on the road.