

## U.S. Department of Transportation Vows to Avenge Preventable Deaths:

Mass called to join nation in movement to ban cell phone distracted driving Secretary Ray LaHood of the US Department of Transportation will be speaking to policy makers in Massachusetts, calling them to act on a bill that could potentially save thousands of lives: SB 1906: an act to require hands-free cell phone devices on public roadways while operating a motor vehicle. The bill addresses the unnecessary grievances of Massachusetts citizens who have lost loved ones to distracted cell phone driver car accidents. The Secretary will hold a press conference on Memorial Day, May 31st, 2010, from 12pm to 1pm outside the State House facing the Boston Common to address the necessity of the bill's passage.

The US Department of Transportation aims to get Massachusetts to join the rest of the country in efforts to eliminate unnecessary dangers to citizens on its public roadways. It is essential to protect the security of the public by preventing the devastating effects resulting from accidents caused by distracted cell phone drivers. Secretary Ray LaHood states, "nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 died in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver, and more than half a million were injured." He continues, "We know it will take all of us—federal officials, law enforcement, researchers, policy makers, private industry, and advocates- to tackle this problem effectively."

As recently as March 2010, Massachusetts still enforces no laws on cell phone use while driving. This includes youth cell phone driving laws, texting, and a bus drivers all cell phone ban. According to the National Safety Council, in a 2008 national survey, roughly eight out of every ten (81 percent) cell phone owners report they talk on their phones while driving and one out of every five (18 percent) report texting while driving. Scientific studies have quantified the risk and arrived at essentially the same conclusion: A driver talking on a cell phone is four times more likely to be in a crash. This is evidence for the severity of the dangers of cell phone driving. It is essential that Massachusetts legislators act now to pass the bill that would make this practice illegal.