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PRESS RELEASE

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REPRESENTATIVE DEMETRIUS J. ATSALIS' LEGISLATION BANNING TEXT MESSAGING WHILE DRIVING RECEIVES MEDIA ATTENTION

Boston, MA Today Representative Demetrius J. Atsalis announced that a Boston media outlet, WBZ radio, interviewed him regarding legislation he filed banning text messaging while operating a motor vehicle. The legislation received attention this weekend after a collision involving two M.B.T.A. Green Line trolleys at a downtown Boston subway station on Friday.

The legislation filed by Atsalis amends Chapter 90 of the Massachusetts General Laws by adding a new section that prohibits text messaging. "Right now the law allows a person to talk on a cell phone as long as a person has their hand on the steering wheel of the motor vehicle," Atsalis said. "The legislation that I filed would still allow the prudent use of cell phones and navigation systems, but would ban a person from sending, writing or reading a text message while that person is behind the wheel of a motor vehicle."

Last year legislation banning cell phone use and text messaging during the operation of a motor vehicle cleared the House of Representatives but failed to receive consideration in the Senate. "I did not vote for last year's legislation because I felt it went a little too far banning the outright use of cell phones while operating a motor vehicle" Atsalis said. "I would say for the most part, drivers use caution when using a cell phone when operating a motor vehicle. Text messaging, however, is a different story" Atsalis further stated. "A person driving and trying to text message isn't really focused or concentrating on the roadway ahead of them," Atsalis said. "A driver without their full concentration on the roadway creates a dangerous situation that could lead to a serious motor vehicle accident causing injury or even death,"