Make Your Press Release Stand Out: A Dime a Dozen

A press release is used to announce new information, new facts or milestone accomplishments of your program/agenda.

- Use letterhead, including your contact information, at the top. Include your organization’s website URL.
- Include contact information at the top.
- Tease them a little. Write a short, catchy headline that includes your most compelling fact or news item.
- Put your best point forward—make sure the most newsworthy facts, findings, or information are in your lead paragraph.
- Include a good quote. Add a personal touch to the issue.
- Find an interesting or powerful ally to add clout to your statement.
- Include all pertinent details—but keep it to one page.
- Following up with a phone call to top reporters. Many reporters are on deadline in the afternoon, so aim for mid-morning if possible.

(See sample press release on the other side)
Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 9, 2009

CONTACT: Elizabeth Weyant, (617) 747-4314

Massachusetts Gets an A- in Spending of Transportation Stimulus Funds
Evaluation of the Commonwealth’s Flexible Stimulus Spending Compared to Other States

Boston, MA -- A new report released today by MASSPIRG Education Fund and Smart Growth America showed that in spending the money apportioned to it under President Obama’s stimulus bill, Massachusetts made better progress than most other states towards repairing roads and investing in public transportation, in addition to bike and pedestrian options.

Coming at the 120-day deadline for states to spend half their transportation stimulus funds, the report showed that “Massachusetts spent its stimulus money well, and is facing its transportation challenges head-on,” according to Lizzi Weyant, staff attorney for MASSPIRG. “The commonwealth should be commended for focusing on projects that invest in public transportation and fix our roads and bridges. These priorities will go a long way towards meeting the goals of the stimulus and can be directly connected to job creation.”

The report, Massachusetts and the Stimulus: An Appraisal of Transportation Spending, draws on official data reported by all 50 states to the US Department of Transportation on stimulus spending from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It examines the extent to which the commonwealth’s projects meet urgent economic recovery and transportation objectives, including expected job creation, investment in public transportation and fixing roads.

The Secretary of Transportation, James Aloisi, Jr., received a report card from MASSPIRG at today’s press conference. “Our recovery efforts are using this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest fixing broken roads and bridges, expanding public transit, bicycle and pedestrian opportunities and sparking economic development,” said Secretary Aloisi. “In every corner of the Commonwealth, we are putting people to work to build safer roads and more livable communities.”

Road and bridge repairs and public transportation projects produce more jobs than construction of new roads and bridges. In fact, Massachusetts ARRA spending in the first 120 days can be predicted to generate 4,676 jobs. The report illustrated that 75 percent of the discretionary stimulus money Massachusetts committed to roads and bridges was spent repairing and restoring our highways, instead of creating more highway miles. The report also showed that Massachusetts committed 19 percent of its overall stimulus spending, the third highest in the country, on projects that support public transportation and advance bike and pedestrian options.

“The investments that the commonwealth is making today will be a benefit for our communities for the future,” says Weyant. “Massachusetts is a leader on transportation stimulus spending when compared to the rest of the nation. This report clearly reflects that leadership.”

(Add background information on your group, web address and link to report here)