

# Limousine Eighteen

On the move

77 SOUTH BEDFORD STREET  
BURLINGTON, MA 01803

March 27, 2007

Dear Dr. Jones:

I am writing to you as a 20 year veteran of the limousine industry, 15 year member of the New England Livery Association (NELA), with six years as the NELA treasurer, graduate of Lexington High School, and parent of a senior at Lexington High School.

In your recent radio interview with WBZ, you made the statement that it is safer to use buses rather than limousines as prom transportation. For the record, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA)'s National Center for Statistic and Analysis (NCSA), in 2005 chauffeured transportation services have had 83% fewer fatalities than motor coach transportation. (This is the most current data available.) Since this statistic is from 2005, it does not include the recent tragedy in Atlanta, GA where students were killed in a bus accident or the buses that caught fire or rollover on trips from Boston to NYC.

In terms of safety, consumers of limousine services should ask about what they are purchasing. Parents should spend time questioning the hiring policies (such as background checks and drug and alcohol testing for chauffeurs) and teen drinking policies of the limousine company. Reputable limousine companies certify that they do not permit underage drinking in vehicles, and if drinking occurs, the parents will be called immediately to deal with the issue. Instead, most consumer questions relate to how many kids can be stuffed into a vehicle for the lowest cost. Parents who are concerned about their children's safety and their potential for drinking at the prom should secure the services of a limousine company that shares those values.

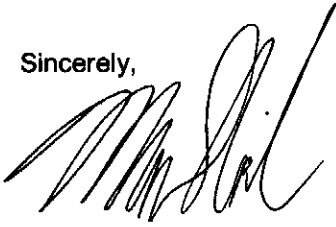
Now speaking as a father and member of the community, I am aware of the fact that a few seniors were caught drinking last year. Those students were dealt with then and their behavior should not affect future senior classes as a whole. Children who are determined to drink at the prom will find creative ways to do so—but it will not be in limousines if the parents have done their homework. Students will get off the bus at the end of the night as you said at a "given place in Lexington," get into their personal vehicles, and do as they please. If they were in a chauffeured limousine, they would be taken directly from the prom site to the place designated by their parents—with no unapproved stops. That is safe transportation. Your statement about cost may be valid, but I do not see the town or the school department budget paying for transportation to the prom, nor did I see an override last fall being voted on to cover additional prom transportation expenses. While it is true that some people cannot afford a limousine service, that is not a safety issue. People who can do so should be allowed to exercise the option.

The recent article in the *Lexington Minuteman* mentioned the very tragic accident of Andrew Stone, a friend of my daughter, and the community grieves for the family's loss. Alcohol may or may not have been involved, but limousines were not, and this accident had nothing to do with the limousine industry. The school cannot control what children do in their private vehicles or their homes. Had Andrew been in a limousine, he would probably be alive today. The real issue to be addressed is underage children drinking and where they obtain the alcohol—from parents, siblings, etc. in their own homes. Perhaps we should be discussing that to prevent kids from showing up at the prom intoxicated or drinking in a car or at a party afterwards.

T 781.274.8000  
800.562.8808  
F 781.425.5088  
E [www.limo18.com](http://www.limo18.com)

Finally as a business owner, for you to say on radio WBZ that "limousine culture leads to social problems" is ridiculous. To what "social problems" are you referring? War, famine, crime, obesity, addiction to video games? If the "social problem" is drinking and driving, then limousine use is part of the solution as the chauffeur is certified to be sober, alert, and trained in safe driving. The drunk driving equation equals zero. Chauffeured transportation has been part of the culture of communities nationwide for over 30 years. Limousines allow friends and families a getaway from the everyday rat race, so they can relax, enjoy the company, and not worry about traffic, etc. Chauffeured services have helped to create lasting memories and experiences for thousands of high school students. Today you could ask earlier graduates about their "prom experience," and they would remember every aspect of the event, including the excitement of seeing a limo pull up in front of their house. Isn't that special touch what we want for our children?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Shpilner', written in a cursive style.

Marc Z. Shpilner  
President  
Limousine Eighteen

Cc: Lexington Minuteman  
NELA