

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 5879

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 17, 1993

Brief Description: Conforming state law on child passenger restraint systems to the Uniform Vehicle Code.

SPONSORS: Senators A. Smith, Spanel, Deccio and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators A. Smith, Chairman; Quigley, Vice Chairman; McCaslin, Nelson, and Spanel.

Staff: Lidia Mori (786-7755)

Hearing Dates: March 3, 1993

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND:

Children that are under one year of age are required to be restrained in a separate child passenger restraint device. Children that are one year of age through four years of age may be restrained with a properly adjusted and fastened, federally approved seat belt.

There is concern that seat belts do not provide adequate protection to children under four years of age.

SUMMARY:

A child who is less than two years old is required to be restrained in a child restraint system that is in compliance with the United States Department of Transportation standards. The child restraint system must be secured in the vehicle according to instructions from the manufacturer of the child restraint system.

A child who is less than six years old but at least two years old is required to be restrained either in a child restraint system as described above or with a safety belt properly fastened around the child's body.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Seat belts do not adequately protect young children. During an accident, their bodies either slip under the seat belt or over it and serious injuries have resulted. This bill conforms to the federal vehicle code.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Cecil Snodgrass, M.D., American College of Emergency Physicians; Cathy Williams, Washington State Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services, Trauma Systems; Abe Bergman, M.D., Washington State Medical Association; Barbara Sibley, M.D., Washington Society of Pediatrics; Steve Lind, Washington Traffic Safety Commission

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

A child who weighs less than 40 pounds or is less than four years old must be restrained in a child restraint system.

A child who is less than six years old but weighs at least 40 pounds or is at least four years old must be restrained in either a child restraint system or with a properly fastened seat belt.

Vehicles "for hire," motor vehicles that are designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, and auto transportation companies are not subject to the above requirements regarding children who are less than six years old.