

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed

Vote: 3 - 0 - 2

Yeas: Beyer, Walker, Burdick

Nays: 0

Exc.: Kruse, Prozanski

Prepared By: Matt Kalmanson, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 4/17, 4/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires children under one year of age, and persons who weigh 20 pounds or less, to be properly secured with a child safety system in a rear-facing position, for purposes of offense of failure to properly use safety belts. Requires children under eight years of age, who weigh more than 40 pounds and are four feet nine inches or shorter, to be in a booster seat.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The Safe Kids Legislative Committee
- Oregon's seatbelt requirements
- Impact of car accidents on children
- Interaction between risk of injury to child in car accident and proper use of seatbelts and booster seats
- Federal grants for enactment of booster seat law

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Restores the exception from the seat-belt requirement for passengers in a vehicle when all seating positions are occupied. Deletes requirement that passengers who are under 13 years old must sit in a rear seating position if one is available.

BACKGROUND: According to at least one study, motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of unintentional injury and death to Oregon children ages 1-14 years, and other studies have shown that children are safest when properly buckled in the back seat of a motor vehicle, and when using a booster seat if they are not tall enough for the shoulder straps to fit properly. In addition, the federal government provides grants to states that enact a booster seat requirement for children who are four feet nine inches or shorter. SB 480 A would enact this requirement as part of its existing seat belt law. It would require children who are less than eight years old and are four feet nine inches or less to sit in a booster seat.