

REVENUE: No revenue impact**FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued**

Action:	Do Pass
Vote:	5 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Bonamici, Boquist, George, Monroe, Shields
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Patrick Brennan, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Permits a child weighing more than 40 pounds and shorter than 4'9" to use either a child safety system designed for children weighing more than 40 pounds or a booster seat. Provides that a booster seat is not required if the rear seat is not equipped with shoulder belts and the child is secured with a lap belt.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of Oregon's child seat law
- New types of seats allow safe use of five-point harness with heavier children
- Different types of child restraint systems

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Senate Bill 480 (2007) established the current requirement for booster seats use by children who weigh more than 40 pounds but are shorter than 4'9" tall. The requirement was established in part based on studies that demonstrated that children are safest when using a booster seat if they are not tall enough for the shoulder belt to fit properly and in part due to federal grants to states that enact booster seat requirements for children 4'9" or shorter. Prior to passage of Senate Bill 480, Oregon law specified that children between ages 4-6 and weighing 40-60 pounds be secured in a child safety system that elevated the child so the seat belt fit properly.

House Bill 3590 clarifies that children weighing over 40 pounds may either ride using a booster seat and shoulder belt, a lap belt only if no shoulder belt is available, or ride secured with a safety system that meets the minimum standards and specifications established by the Oregon Department of Transportation under ORS 815.055 for children weighing more than 40 pounds. Such systems typically use a five-point harness system, which is considered safer for young children than a lap or shoulder belt used with a booster seat.