



March 28th, 2017

House Committee on Early Childhood
and Family Supports

Dear Chair John Lively and Members of the Committee:

This letter serves to thank the Committee for supporting HB 2643 which will reduce trauma and fatalities of children involved in traffic crashes by requiring the use of rear-facing child seats.

The research and corresponding best practice is clear. For children under the age of two, rear-facing car seats offer the best protection in the event of a crash. For our police officers and deputy sheriffs, crashes involving the injury or death of a young child are traumatic. Where the research tells us that there is a standard that will improve child safety, law enforcement is eager to support adjustments to the law.

While this change is important for early childhood safety, law enforcement leaders across Oregon recognize public awareness and compliance will not happen overnight. Provided the bill becomes law, the associations of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and the State Police are committed to provide clear guidance to our law enforcement professionals that absent compelling factors, our expectation will be to educate and issue warnings through an appropriate transition period as opposed to citations. We believe such guidance to our staff, with information provided to new parents by medical professionals, in combination with public information campaigns by our agencies and partner non-profit organizations will effectively transition Oregon to this enhanced child safety standard.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Pat Garrett in black ink.

Pat Garrett, President
Oregon State Sheriffs' Association
Sheriff, Washington County

Handwritten signature of Geoff Spalding in black ink.

Geoff Spalding, President
Oregon Association Chiefs of Police
Chief of Police Ret., Beaverton PD

Handwritten signature of Travis Hampton in black ink.

Travis Hampton
Superintendent, Oregon State Police