



# Strengthening car safety for kids

## Issue

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children over the age of 1 year and proper car seat safety can reduce this risk by 71 percent.<sup>1</sup>

The first years of a child's life are developmentally significant for both brain and anatomical growth. This developmental stage puts them at significant risk if they are forward-facing in a car crash. Research shows that children between the ages of one and two are more than five times more likely to be injured in an accident in a forward-facing car seat. Current Oregon law only requires that infants up to age one travel in a rear-facing car seat.

## Background

The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended that children remain in rear-facing car seats as long as possible, to at least age two, or to the weight and height limits of their car safety seat. The rear-facing seats allow all the force of a crash to be spread over the entire back of the child from head to toe, protecting the head, neck and spinal cord better than any other restraint system.

## Proposed solution

Bill number HB 3404 would change Oregon's car safety seat laws to reflect those adopted in California, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Oklahoma and require children younger than two be in a rear facing car seat.

## Cost

There is no cost related to this change.

## Questions?

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<sup>1</sup>Durbin DR, & Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention. (2011) Child passenger safety. *Pediatrics*. 2011;127(4):e1050-1066