

HB 3404 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Malstrom

House Committee On Early Childhood and Family Supports

Action Date: 03/30/17

Action: Do pass with amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Bynum, Hack, Hayden, Huffman, Keny-Guyer, Lively, Malstrom, Piluso, Smith DB

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Zena Rockowitz, LPRO Analyst

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires children under age two to be properly secured with a child safety system in a rear-facing position. Exempts children who are one year or older immediately before effective date of act. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Risk of injury or death for children two and younger who ride in a forward-facing car seat
- Warnings and citations by law enforcement
- Difficulties of changing routines of children
- Awareness of car seat safety by physicians, parents or guardians, and law enforcement
- Subset of children one year and older at the time the law passes that would not be required to be in rear-facing car seat

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Exempts children who are one year or older immediately before effective date of act.

BACKGROUND:

Current law requires children under age one, or children weighing 20 pounds or less to be in a rear-facing position in a car seat. A 2007 study in the Injury Prevention Journal analyzed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration crash data of 870 children and found that rear-facing car seats are more effective than forward-facing seats in protecting children aged 0-23 months for all crash types. In 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued a recommendation that all infants and toddlers should ride in a rear-facing car seat until age two or until they reach the height or weight limit of the car seat's manufacturer. Current available car seats accommodate these recommendations. AAP reports that infants younger than age two have relatively large heads and structural features of their neck and spine that place them at particularly high risk of injuries in crashes. Rear-facing car seats support the neck and spine if a crash occurs.