

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Gary Hayzlett at 1:40 p.m. on February 25 , 2002 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Compton, excused  
Representative Howell, excused  
Representative Kauffman, excused

Committee staff present:

Bruce Kinzie, Office of the Revisor  
Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department  
Beverly Adams, Acting Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Jim Keating, Safe Kids  
Cherie Sage, AAA  
Trista Beadle, Office of the Governor  
Julie Sergeant - KDHE  
Rosalie Thornburgh - KDOT

Others attending:

See attached sheet

**HB 2886 - child passenger safety act**

Chairman Hayzlett opened hearings on **HB 2886** and called on Bruce Kinzie, Revisor, to explain the bill and the changes from SB 172 which was introduced in 2001. He said the major differences are the term "booster seat" is not defined, the age for being included in safety restraints change from 14 to 16, fine raised from \$20 to \$60, if fine is waived court costs are still included, and exemption if the vehicle only has lap seat belts and warning citations will be issued for one year.

Jim Keating, Safe Kids, was the first proponent to speak. He said this bill closes many of the gaps in Kansas' current Child Passenger Safety laws and will provide Kansas parents with better guidance on how to best protect their children. It will also send a clear message to motorists that the state considers child safety seat, booster seat and seat belt use necessary for the safety of our children. He also stated they no longer list "booster seats", rather child passenger safety restraining system as this language would cover any technology that may come later. (Attachment 1)

Cherie Sage presented testimony for the American Automobile Association of Kansas. She told the committee that each year more than 1,700 children die and approximately 300,000 are injured as occupants in motor vehicle crashes. Child safety seats, when properly used and installed, reduce the risk of death by 71 percent for infants and by 54 percent for toddlers. She concluded that since its formation in 1902, AAA has been an advocate for the motorist, as well as for traffic safety. She said support of **HB 2886** is a step forward towards making the roads and highways a safer place to be for the children of Kansas. (Attachment 2)

The next proponent was Trista Beadle from the Office of the Governor. She said parents and other caretakers look to the government to provide them with information and guidelines about issues in which they do not have expertise. She said a review conducted by the National Safe Kids Campaign in 2001 showed that Kansas merited only 52.29 points on a 100 point system and did not receive a passing grade. She said this review should be taken as a call to enact much needed legislation to improve the child occupant protection laws. (Attachment 3)

Julie F. Sergeant, Kansas Department of Health & Environment, supplied statistics to show that Kansas routinely experiences more motor vehicle crash deaths than the national average. She said that in addition to improved quality of life for Kansans, this legislation will result in reduced costs for insurance, programs such as the Medicaid Brain Injury Waiver Program that serve citizens with a traumatic brain injury and health care such as hospitalizations. (Attachment 4)

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Rosalie Thornburgh, Chief of the Bureau of Traffic Safety for Kansas Department of Transportation, was the next speaker. She said saving lives and preventing serious injury is the purpose for enhanced child passenger protection. Providing an appropriate and safe transition from infant seats to lap/shoulder belts is important to ensure that the child will continue to use safety belts throughout his/her life. She concluded that statistics show that the most effective means to reach the objective of increased child passenger safety is a stronger law. (Attachment 5)

2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant John Eichkorn, Kansas Highway Patrol, said, regrettably, Kansas current law regarding child occupant protection has been identified as having provisions that do not necessarily provide the highest level of safety. In amending this law, **HB 2886** proposes to increase children's level of protection as they travel on Kansas' roadways. (Attachment 6) He showed a video on the correct way to position child safety seats and seatbelts.

Written testimony in support of **HB 2886** was presented by Carolyn Ward, State Child Death Review Board, (Attachment 7) Sally Finney, Kansas Public Health Association, Inc. (Attachment 8) and Terri Roberts, Kansas State Nurses Association. (Attachment 9)

There were no opponents.

Following questions by the committee, Chairman Hayzlett closed hearings on **HB 2886**.

The next meeting of the House Transportation Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.