

SENATE BILL REPORT

2ESSB 5112

As Passed Senate, February 13, 2002

Title: An act relating to child passenger restraint systems.

Brief Description: Applying child restraint system laws to children less than eight years of age and less than four feet nine inches in height.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Costa, Swecker, Fairley, Oke, Gardner, Haugen, Eide, Kohl-Welles and Patterson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/31/01, 2/7/01 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 3/8/01, 40-8; 2/13/02, 33-15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5112 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Gardner, Vice Chair; Benton, Jacobsen, Johnson, Kastama, McAuliffe, Oke, Patterson, Prentice, Shin and Swecker.

Staff: Mike Groesch (786-7434)

Background: During the 2000 legislative session, ESHB 2675 passed which, among other things, required that children between four years of age or over 40 pounds and six years of age or 60 pounds be required to use a booster seat. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has recommended that children up to age eight and less than four feet nine inches in height be required to use booster seats.

Summary of Bill: Children who are between the ages of four and eight and less than four feet nine inches in height must ride in a child booster seat. Any person who inspects, adjusts or provides educational services regarding a child passenger restraint system is not liable for civil damages unless their actions constitute gross negligence.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Automobile accidents are the leading cause of death for children. Children less than eight years old are not sufficiently physically developed for seat belts to protect them without the use of booster seats. Children can also suffer abdominal injuries from the use of a seat belt without the use of a booster seat when involved in an accident.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: John Moffat, Washington Traffic Safety Commission; Dr. Beth Ebel, Pediatrician, Harborview; Katharine Kruger, Washington Safety Restraint Coalition; Deputy John Cummings, Snohomish County Sheriff's Office; Tamara Cline, Kent Police Department.