



May 3, 2016

The Honorable Laura Cox
Michigan State Senate
House Office Building N0698
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Senator Cox:

Thank you for your leadership in introducing HB5559 to strengthen Michigan's child passenger safety law which will protect the most vulnerable people in our state, our children. Michigan has been a national leader on road safety laws and passage of HB5559 would continue that life-saving tradition.

Your bill responds to the most recent set of recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics to require the smallest kids to be rear facing in a car seat up to age two or weighing less than 30 pounds and require kids who are no more than 57 inches and weigh 50 pounds or more to be in a booster seat. These careful recommendations are based on evidence.

- When comparing the risk of injury for children 12 to 23 months old in front and rear-facing car seats during a car crash, the risk of a moderate or severe injury is five times higher for the child in the front facing seat.
- The use of booster seats reduces the risk of serious injury by 45 percent in comparison to seat belts for children 4 to 8 years of age.
- From 2000-2014, for children 0-8, there has been a 51 percent decrease in the number of fatalities.

States as diverse as Oklahoma, California and New Jersey have passed similar laws. A study based on a survey of Michigan parents concluded that "legislation was a key determinant of the level of use and the motivation to use booster seats." Some 60% of sometime users and non-users of booster seats said they would be more likely to use booster seats regularly if required by law.

Safe Kids is a network of organizations dedicated to protecting kids from unintentional injuries, the number one cause of death to children in the United States. We work with a network of more than 400 coalitions in the U.S. on a range of injuries from sports injuries and home incidents to highway and motor vehicle tragedies. We have a strong presence in Michigan with 11 coalitions, including Safe Kids North Shore, Safe Kids Washtenaw Co, Safe Kids Kalamazoo, Safe Kids Greater Grand Rapids, Safe Kids Capital Area, and Safe Kids Metro Detroit.

Passage of this bill would be an important for the safety of Michigan's children. We thank you for your consideration of this bill. If you have any questions, kindly contact Jennifer Hoekstra of Safe Kids Greater Grand Rapids, 616.391.SAFE, Jennifer.hoekstra@helendevoschildrens.org

Sincerely,

Safe Kids North Shore

Safe Kids Kalamazoo

Safe Kids Capital Area

Safe Kids Greater Grand Rapids

Safe Kids Metro Detroit