

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Child Restraint Law Expanded
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Overview

This bill expands the scope of the law that now requires motor vehicle passengers under age four to be transported in a child restraint system. Under this bill the requirement will apply up to the age of nine years. The penalty for transporting a child not in a child restraint system is increased from \$50 to \$75. The requirement that children up to age 11 wear a seat belt in any seat of a passenger vehicle is extended to 18 years. Certain exemptions from the seat belt use law are also repealed.

Section

- 1 **Child restraint system.** Amends the law that requires children under age four to be transported in a child restraint system when in a motor vehicle equipped with factory-installed seat belts: children under one year must be transported in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system
children under age 9 who are also under 80 pounds in weight must be transported in a child restraint system
children under age 9 who weigh 80 pounds or more must wear a seat belt, and a shoulder belt if available.
Increases from \$50 to \$75 the fine for a person who transports a child in violation of these requirements. Amends the law that allows the fine to be waived or reduced if the violator buys a child restraint system within 14 days of the violation, by allowing this waiver or reduction only if the person had no previous violations of this requirement.
- 2 **Seat belt requirement.** Amends the law that requires children over three but younger than 11 to wear a seat belt in any seat of a passenger vehicle, by making apply to any child older than 9 but under 18.
- 3 **Seat belt exemptions.** Repeals the exemptions from the seat belt law for (a) vehicles backing up, and (2) vehicles where all the seat belts are in use.

4 **Effective date.** Makes sections 1 to 3 effective for violations committed on and after August 1, 2001.