



September 7, 2017

The Honorable Laura Cox
Michigan House of Representatives
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Representative Cox:

We write as Safe Kids coalitions around our state in strong support of your legislation to strengthen Michigan's child passenger safety law, which will protect the most vulnerable people in our state, our children.

Your legislation comes at an important time because for the first time in decades there's a trend upwards in road fatalities for all populations throughout the nation. Between 2014 and 2015, there was a 6 percent increase in the number of fatalities for kids 0-8.ⁱ (See chart on page 2.)

The bill responds to the most recent set of recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics that requires the smallest kids to be rear facing in a car seat up to age two or weighing less than 30 pounds and 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:

- Children under the age of two are 75% less likely to sustain a serious injury or die when they are in a rear-facing car seat.ⁱⁱ
- The odds of injury for children riding in booster seats are 59 percent lower than the risks children face when using safety belts alone.ⁱⁱⁱ
- From 2000-2015, for children 0-8, there has been a 47 percent decrease in the number of motor vehicle related child passenger fatalities.ⁱ

This is so important because parents and caregivers look to the laws of their states on how to keep their kids safe in cars. 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."^{iv} 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.^{iv}

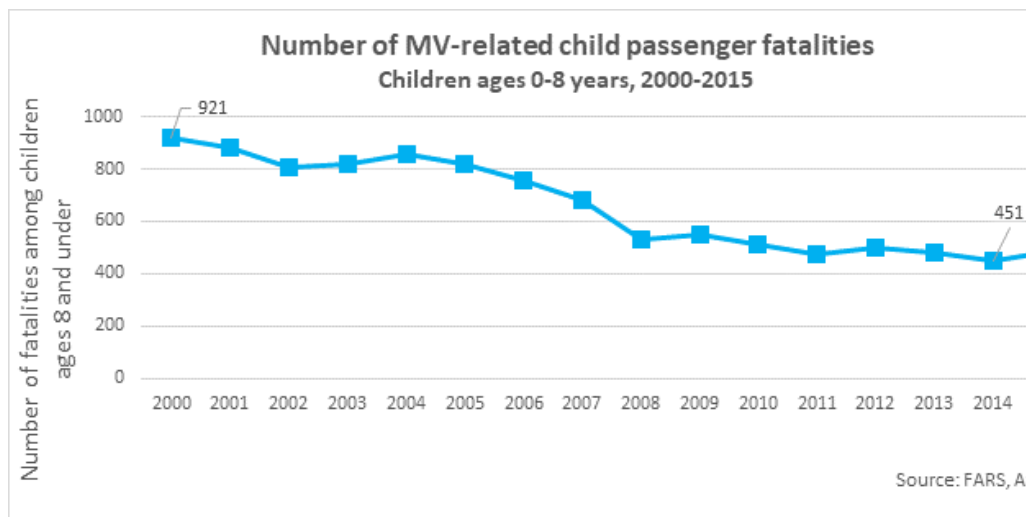
Safe Kids is a network of organizations dedicated to protecting kids from unintentional injuries, the number one cause of death to children in the United States. We work with a network of more than 418 coalitions in the U.S. on a range of injuries from sports injuries to highway and motor vehicle tragedies. We have a strong presence in Michigan with 14 coalitions, including Safe Kids Michigan. In addition, for

twenty years Safe Kids has partnered with the General Motors Foundation on child safety involving kids “on the road.”

Passage of this bill would be an important advance for the safety of Michigan’s children. We thank you for your consideration of this bill. Kindly contact our coalition leader in Grand Rapids if you have any questions, Jennifer Hoekstra, 616.485.0205 or Jennifer.Hoekstra@helendevoschildrens.org.

Sincerely,

Safe Kids West Michigan
Safe Kids Greater Grand Rapids
Safe Kids Capital Area
Safe Kids Greater Flint Michigan
Safe Kids Kalamazoo
Safe Kids Huron Valley
Safe Kids Metro Detroit



Increase between 2014-2015

ⁱ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). Washington, D.C. Accessed

ⁱⁱ Bull M, Durbin D, “Rear-Facing Car Safety Seats: Getting the Message Right,” Pediatrics, 04/2008; 121(3):619-20. Accessed June 17, 2016. Available at http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/121/3/619?sso=1&sso_redirect_count=1&nfstatus=401&nftoken=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000&nfstatusdescription=ERROR%3a+No+local+token (abstract only).

ⁱⁱⁱ Journal of the American Medical Association, June 2003, available at <https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/research/6thAnnualBUARreport/pages/Status.htm>.

^{iv} Bingham CR, Eby DW, Hockanson HM, Greenspan AI, “Factors Influencing the Use of Booster Seats: A State-Wide Survey of Parents, Accident Analysis & Prevention,” 09/2006; 38(5): 1028-1037. Accessed May 17, 2016. Available at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16737675>.

^v Anthony Green, Safe Kids Worldwide, Director, Public Policy, agreen@safekids.org