



March 16, 2018

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Governor of Virginia
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Northam:

We write to thank you for signing Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn's bill, HB708, which will help keep Virginia children safe by requiring them to ride rear-facing in their car seat until age 2 or they reach the minimum weight limit of their car seat. As a pediatric neurologist you know how important it is for children to be buckled up safely. Our hope is that you will help us raise awareness about this important issue by choosing HB708 for one of your first public bill signings.

In 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics updated its standards recommending that children remain rear-facing in their car seats until age 2. Seven years later however, many parents are still turning their child's car seat from rear-facing to forward-facing on or even before their first birthday. This is dangerous because a small child's body is still developing and needs the extra support the rear-facing position provides in the case of a crash.

Members of the road safety, injury prevention and medical communities worked together to support this bill. They included Safe Kids Virginia, the American Automobile Association, Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center and Children's National Health System. Additionally, there are over 1,300 certified child passenger safety technicians in Virginia many of whom are police, firefighters and sheriff's deputies. They are a parents' partner in keeping their children safe in car seats. It would be a good opportunity to recognize them for the work they all do to protect kids.

As a pediatrician and Governor of Virginia, we are calling on you to lend your voice to this important issue. There are over 200,000 children in Virginia under age 2 and their parents need to hear about this new law. We hope you will hold a formal bill signing and join us in spreading the message about child passenger safety.

Sincerely,

Corri Miller-Hobbs
Coalition Coordinator
Safe Kids Virginia

Torine Creppy
President
Safe Kids Worldwide