

Approved February 18, 1987

Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

The meeting was called to order by SENATOR JOSEPH C. HARDER at
Chairperson

1:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on Tuesday, February 17, 1987 in room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Mr. Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Ms. Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Ms. Avis Swartzman, Legislative Revisor's Office
Mrs. Millie Randell, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

SB 179 - Concerning school districts; relating to school transportation vehicles as therein defined; requiring certain equipment.
(Senator Mulich et al.)

Proponents:

Senator William (Bill) Mulich, co-sponsor of SB 179
Ms. Nancy Clark Bauder, Leavenworth, President of Kansans for Highway Safety
Mr. Burdell N. Welsh, Community Relations Officer, Leavenworth County Sheriff's Department

Opponents:

Mr. Richard Funk, Assistant Executive Director, Kansas Association of School Boards
Mr. Ken Rogg, Legislative Representative, Schools for Quality Education
Mr. Gerald W. Henderson, Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas
Mr. Ed Lindsay, Jefferson West High School, USD 340, Meriden; Administrative Assistant and Vice President of Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association

Following a call to order by Chairman Joseph C. Harder, Senator Allen moved that the Committee minutes of February 16 be approved. The motion was seconded by Senator Warren, and the motion carried.

SB 179 - The Chairman then recognized Senator William Mulich, co-sponsor of SB 179, who related that he had co-sponsored a similar bill last year but that last-year's bill applied to both new and old school buses. SB 179, he stated, applies to new school buses only. Senator Mulich's testimony is found in Attachment 1.

Ms. Nancy Clark Bauder, President of Kansans for Highway Safety, encouraged the Committee to vote for SB 179 in her supportive testimony found in Attachment 2. In response to questions, Ms. Bauder replied that the cost per bus for seat belts on large buses is around \$1500 and that 78% of school buses in Kansas would fall in this category. In response to another question, Ms. Bauder indicated that Kansas has a good safety record regarding school bus accidents/injuries and that school bus injuries sustained last year were all of a minor nature. She reminded the Committee of the possibility of increased insurance rates when a greater number of accidents/injuries should be reported and felt that this knowledge might prevent some schools from reporting some incidents. Ms. Bauder also replied that there are approximately 5,000 school buses in Kansas and that about 500 are replaced yearly. She said that most Kansas buses, therefore, probably do meet standards set by the National Transportation Safety Board.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

room 254-E, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~a.m.~~/p.m. on Tuesday, February 17, 1987

Mr. Burdel N. Welsh, Community Relations Officer, Leavenworth County Sheriff's Department, also speaking for passage of SB 179, related how his duties often include the formation and presentation of programs dealing with child safety. In reference to wearing seat belts, he said he often is asked (both by children and adults) why children are required to be in an approved child restraint seat from ages birth to four years, be required to wear a safety belt in a car beyond that age, but not be required to wear a safety belt on a school bus. (Attachment 3)

Mr. Richard Funk, Kansas Association of School Boards, in presenting testimony (Attachment 4) against mandatory installation and use of seat belts on school buses, maintained that school bus transportation is among the safest form of transportation available today and said that the wearing of seat belts is not a contributing factor. Mr. Funk noted the problems that could arise relating to compliance monitoring.

When Mr. Ken Rogg was recognized by the Chair, Mr. Rogg explained that his organization, Schools for Quality Education, represents 78 school districts and that the area it covers represents 25 percent of the state. He said that Schools for Quality Education is opposed to mandatory seat belts on school buses and referred the Committee's attention to the results of a Canadian study which reported that the number of accidents involving school buses remains relatively small and that most of the school bus accidents involving school children occur outside the school bus. Mr. Rogg expressed concern regarding the effective date for implementation of the bill should it pass. He said that the July 1 implementation date is too short a notice, for most of the buses for next year would have already been ordered prior to that date. He, too, expressed concern regarding whose responsibility it would be to enforce ensuring that all children on school buses are "buckled up". Another concern noted by Mr. Rogg was funding. He felt that the state should provide up-front money to cover the additional expenses that would occur because of this bill.

Mr. Gerald W. Henderson, United School Administrators, felt that passage of SB 179 could cause more safety problems than it would solve in his testimony found in Attachment 5.

Mr. Ed Lindsay, representing the Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association, referred to a report by the National Transportation Safety Board which reviewed the matter of safety belts on school buses in 1983 and found that current standards appear to be effective in eliminating or substantially reducing the majority of school bus passenger injuries. It further concluded that "We do not believe that Federal requirement for safety belts in large school buses is warranted". (Attachment 6) Mr. Lindsay expressed concern regarding the location of any device above the head on school buses and noted that this is against Federal standards. Most accidents occur, he maintained, because of inattentiveness of the driver; and if the driver should be held responsible for enforcing a seat belt law, this would only lessen his attentiveness.

Following testimony by Mr. Lindsay, the Chairman said that SB 179 would be taken under advisement, and he adjourned the meeting.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: 254-E

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 1987

GUEST LIST

NAME

ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

Nancy Bauder	Leavenworth	Kansas for Highway Safety
Richard S Lusk	Topoka	KANB
Gene Poppe	Wichita	WFT
Ed Roney	Meriden	KSPTA
Jay Collins	Topoka	KNEA
Burdell Walsh	Leavenworth	LU Co Sheriff
Jeff Schmidt	Goessel	Page
Leon Madras	Topoka	USA
Merle Hice	"	KACC
Blake Pappas	Tecumseh, Mo.	Student
Cliff Allen	Topoka	State

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

TIME: 1:30 p.m. PLACE: 254-E DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 1987

GUEST LIST

NAME

ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION

NAME	ADDRESS	ORGANIZATION
Ken Regg	Paola	at Q E
Briella Highfield Scott	Topoka	USA
^{Paola} Suderman	Goessel	Page
Samuel K. Shuler	Topoka	USD 437
Marty Crines	Topoka	W.U.
Harold Pitts	Topoka	
Kathryn Dysart	Wichita	Wichita Public Schools
Vickie Walter	Topoka	KC STAR
Cliff Brealer	2631 S E Shawnee	school
Scott Sobba	Topoka	school
Kyle Kinnard	Topoka	school
Ann Young	Topoka	school
Lori Lilly	Topoka	Shawnee Heights school

STATE OF KANSAS

WILLIAM (BILL) MULICH
SENATOR FIFTH DISTRICT
WYANDOTTE COUNTY
3744 NORTH 67TH
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66104
PHONE (913) 299-8283 OR
299-1237



TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

February 17, 1987

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
MEMBER ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION
CONFIRMATIONS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I am here today to represent the interests of hundreds of children across the state that ride school buses. At issue is whether or not their world should be safer. I believe it can be and will be if S.B. 179 is adopted.

S.B. 179 requires that every school transportation vehicle purchased after the effective date of this act is to be equipped with a passenger restraining system or seat belt. Although not contained in this legislation, I believe that the operator of a school bus should be required to check and see that all passengers are wearing seat belts prior to moving the bus.

I believe enactment of this legislation will provide a three-fold benefit. First, the children are given more protection and the bus driver is given more control. Children riding school buses will be secure within the seat occupied. Should the bus roll over, be involved in a side-impact collision, or stop suddenly, the children will not be thrown about or out of the school bus.

Serious injuries can be limited to minor injuries or hopefully to no injuries at all.

The belts also give bus drivers control over the behavior of students therefore allowing the driver to pay more attention

Senate Education
2/17/87
Attachment 1

to driving. This is significant considering the NHTSA attributes driver inattention as being a significant cause in the majority of school bus accidents.

The second benefit from enacting S.B. 179 is the safety consciousness that children will learn by using seat belts. At present, there is a conflict in our law. Small children are presently required to be properly secured in a safety restraint device while riding in an automobile. Front seat passengers are required to be properly secured in a safety restraint device while riding in an automobile. School bus drivers are required to "belt up". Children that ride school buses are not required to wear seat belts. Is this the message we want our children to learn? I think not.

The third benefit of this legislation is peace of mind for parents that their child will be safer. I want that for my children and grandchildren. I hope that you want the same for yours.

What I'm offering is an ounce of prevention, in exchange for a pound of cure. I hope some child in this state doesn't have to die or be severely injured for this to occur. I urge your support for S.B.179.

BUS SAFETY IN KANSAS - WHERE DO WE STAND?

February 1987

Within the past ten years the movement of seat belt usage has gained momentum and spread to include school buses. But the necessity of seat belt usage in cars is not the issue of this article. On October 10, 1985, the first school bus passenger fatality in the State of New York occurred in more than five years. This past summer, only nine months later, New York became the first state to pass a law requiring all new school buses built for use in New York after July 1, 1987 to be equipped with seat belts and extra padding on seat backs. School districts will also be required to provide instruction on the proper use of seat belts.¹ In that accident, an 11-year old boy landed on his stomach against a corner of another seat. The coroner stated, "If he had a seat belt on, he would have been restrained and wouldn't have hit the frame."² This was a low-speed, one-vehicle accident. Last year there were 20 fatalities involving school bus passengers.³

Most injuries related to school buses involve school bus passengers inside the bus.⁴ In addition to collisions and rollovers, passengers may be injured during sudden stops and turns and while hanging out of windows. There is clear evidence that seat belts will hold passengers in seats during stops, turns, and evasive maneuvers, thus protecting them. Children belted in place will also have difficulty sticking their heads and arms out of windows.⁵ Seat belts have also been shown to improve the behavior of passengers, thereby diminishing distractions that may affect the driver.⁶ Finally, requiring seat belts on school buses reinforces the use of safety belts in cars -- usage that is the law in Kansas for young children and front seat occupants. Our schools exist to educate our children. An opportunity to demonstrate and reinforce safe behavior is an education opportunity with life-long implications.

In 1977, Federal standards of higher back, padded seats and improved bus structure were a step toward safer buses, and have indeed greatly reduced fatalities, but thousands of injuries to children in bus accidents continue to occur every year. (In 1985, 6700 pupils were injured in school bus accidents; in 1984, 5500 pupils injured; in 1983, 3300 pupils were injured.)⁴ Injury statistics can vary greatly. In Kansas in 1985, there were only 21 reported pupil injuries. Yet in March, 1986, during one accident in Kansas City, 32 passengers were injured in one school bus accident. Injuries reported to the National Transportation Safety Board in their school bus safety report last year include minor injuries: contusions, concussions, abrasions, fractures, and lacerations to the head and extremities; and major injuries: abdominal injuries, head, neck and back injuries, and amputations. The reports state that these injuries occur as students strike the roof, windows, seatbacks, and other students.

In 1967, a major study on school bus construction and safety features was conducted at UCLA. The term compartmentalization was first used in that study, and referred to a recommended 28" high seat back and a padded side arm, and seat belts to reduce the chances of injuries sustained by passengers being hurled against one another.⁷ Kansas meets the federal requirement of 24" above the seat cushion. Even with a higher seat back it is a myth that compartmentalization provides sufficient protection. Without seat belts, children are not protected in side impact, and rollover accidents. We need to guarantee that children will stay in the compartment during the accident.

Senate Education
2/17/87, Attachment 2

Discipline generally improves when seat belts are on the bus. A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, February, 1986 showed improved behavior in buses equipped with belts. All of the transportation directors in the study, even those initially opposed to the trial belt programs, supported decisions to equip their entire fleets with belts. The calmer climate produced by seat belt usage allows drivers to concentrate better on their driving and observe more carefully the students in the danger zones outside the bus.⁶ Increasing the safety of children exiting the bus and crossing the street is an absolutely essential focus for student safety, as well as strengthening enforcement of laws concerning vehicles passing a stopped school bus. Efforts toward a solution to the safety problems in the loading zones lie in education of the students and the public.

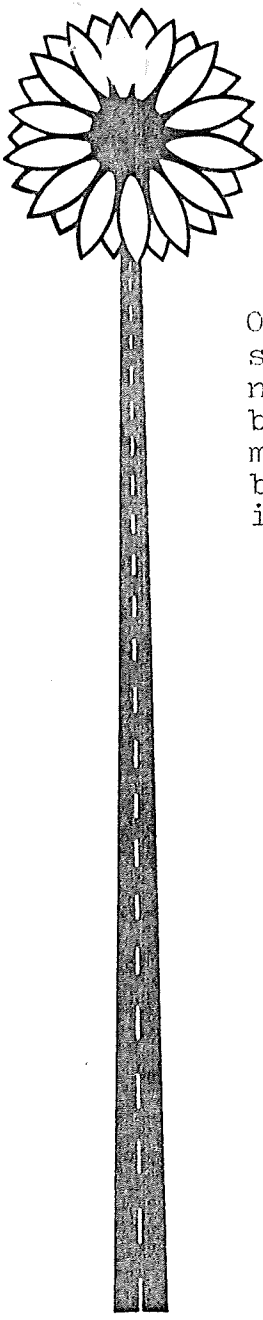
The number one cause of fatalities in children is the automobile accident. Restraint usage in children ages 0 to 5 years is at 52%, then drops to only 20% age 5 and over, when they start school, often riding longer than riding in a car. School is the ideal place for safety education which will continue throughout the child's life. I hope that you will support and recognize the importance of these safety measures.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Clark Bauder
President
Kansans for Highway Safety
RFD #4 Box 241A
Leavenworth, Kansas 66048

References:

1. The New York Seat Belt Law, passed July, 1986
2. Sarah Passell, "Coroner Says Seat Belt Would Have Saved Boy," News-Times (Carmel, NY), October 22, 1985.
3. US Dept. of Transportation, Fatal Accident Reporting System.
4. National Safety Council, Accident Facts
5. Robert Tanz, M.D., Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, Northwestern University Medical School (1/26/87)
6. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Feb. 1986. School Bus Safety Belts: Their Use, Carryover Effects and Administrative Issues.
7. UCLA 1968 Crash Tests
8. US Dept. of Transportation.



Kansans for Highway Safety

SEAT BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES

February 1987

On behalf of Kansans for Highway Safety, I hope that you will support legislation requiring seat belt installation on all newly-manufactured school buses. We are in favor of legislation because as the following research points out, belts and compartmentalization can work together to protect passengers on school buses, as well as providing education value that may save lives in automobile accidents.

1. U. of California 1968 Crash Test (UCLA study reported 1971) recommended - "all buses be equipped with restraint systems...Restraint within the seat area is essential for injury minimization."
2. Natl. Transportation Safety Board - 1971 Highway Accident Report #72-2 - "The NTSB determines that the fatalities and injuries were caused...in some cases by the absence of occupant restraint."
3. Natl. Transportation Safety Board - 1981 Highway Accident Report #81-7 : "Contributing to the severity of the occupants' injuries and to the fatalities was the lack of occupant restraint which permitted the ejection of most of the occupants."
4. Natl. Transportation Safety Board - 1982 (Aug. 25) Press Release : "Seat belt usage by children in school buses may not be only possible but relatively easy to achieve."
5. NTSB 1981: "Since 1967, the Safety Board has issued 13 safety recommendations requiring the installation and use of seat belts in intercity and/or school buses."
6. National Safety Council - 1983, 1984, 1985 Accident Facts: 1983 - 3300 injuries to pupils, 10 fatalities inside school buses; 1984- 5500 injuries, 10 fatalities; 1985- 6700 injuries, 20 fatalities.
7. Thomas School Bus Crash Test (Transport Canada, 1985): HIC levels in large school buses were lower than those deemed by DOT to cause serious injury.
8. Natl. Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1985: Safety Belts in School Buses - "In side impact and rollover the use of seat belts are likely to provide additional safety."
9. Physicians for Auto Safety Endorsement (Dr. Arthur Yeager): "Because of their injury reducing potential and the valuable lesson they teach, seat belts should be provided on school buses." (3/1/85)
10. Dr. John States, Rochester General Hospital, Chairman, Dept. of Orthopaedics (12/23/85): "I believe that the installation of lap belts in ...school buses will not increase the risk of injury... but will actually reduce the risk."

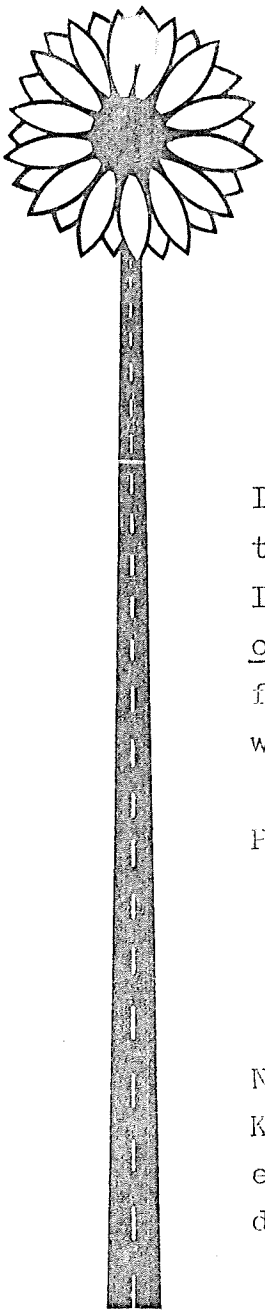
11. Natl. Highway Traffic Safety Admin. Feb. 1986 School Bus Safety: Their Use, Carryover Effects, and Administrative Issues: "Administrators, transportation directors, and drivers reported improved behavior on buses equipped with belts...and experienced fewer distractions in belt-equipped buses than in non-equipped vehicles."
12. K.Weber, MA, and J. Melvin, PHD, U. of Michigan College of Engineering: "We firmly believe that newly purchased large school buses should be equipped with lap belts."
13. A. Siegel, Forensic Consultant, Trauma Research Group, Encino, Calif. (10/2/86): "For school buses, the seat belt angles related to the pelvic area of a child are close to ideal due to the seat design, the seat height from the floor, and the location of the belts to the seat horizontal frame bar."
14. Wayne Bus Corp., Robert Kurre, Consultant (9/18/86): "With added compartmentalization protection provided in the school bus I believe seat belts in school buses are also effective in the head-on mode."
15. M. Spital, BA, A. Spital, MD, and R. Spital, PhD; Rochester School of Medicine: The Compelling Case for Seat Belts on School Buses - "There is strong evidence that seat belts would increase the safety of school buses."
16. U.S. Dept. of Transportation - 1986: Child restraint in automobiles - usage is at 52% for 0-5 year olds, and drops to 20% for 5years and up.

Kansas organizations supporting seat belts on school buses:

The Kansas Department of Health And Environment
 The Kansas Parent Teachers Association
 Kansans for Highway Safety

National organizations supporting seat belts on school buses:

The American Medical Association
 The American Society for Adolescent Medicine
 The American Association for Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons
 The American Academy of Pediatrics
 The American College of Preventive Medicine
 The Center for Auto Safety - Washington, D.C.
 The National Parent Teachers Association
 The National Passenger Safety Association
 Physicians for Auto Safety
 The National Coalition for Seat Belts on School Buses
 Council for Child and Adolescent Health
 Natl. Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners
 The American School Health Association
 The American Academy of Family Physicians



Kansans for Highway Safety

SMALL BUS BELT USAGE IN KANSAS

Figures provided by Kansas Dept. of Transportation.

In Kansas, there are 1026 small buses that fall under the criteria of required standard belt installation. In accident studies from 1/1/85 to 12/31/85, 65% to 75% of pupils riding small buses were belted. (The reasons for variation is because in some accidents, belt use was not known, or reported.)

Passengers involved in accidents:

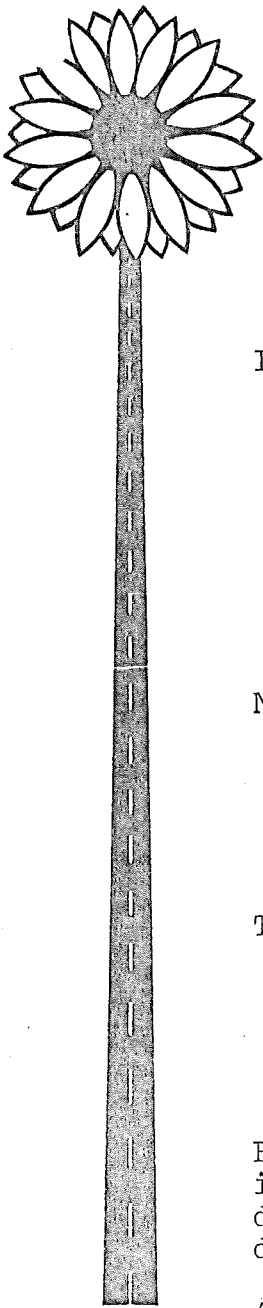
Not fastened belts	- 97
Fastened belts	-174
Unknown	-119

No breakdown on injury severity was available from the Kansas Dept. of Transportation. Because of Kansas' excellent bus safety record, there were only 22 injuries during 1985 statewide.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Clark Bauder 12-5-86

Nancy Clark Bauder
President KHS



Kansans for Highway Safety

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL BUS ACCIDENT STATISTICS 1979 - 1985

Injuries

1979	-	4400	
1980	-	4600	
1981	-	4300	
1982	-	4200	
1983	-	3300	
1984	-	5500	(40% increase)
1985	-	6700	(20% increase)

Number of school buses

1979	-	380,000	vehicles
1985	-	<u>350,000</u>	vehicles
		30,000	fewer vehicles (8% decrease)

Total Number of Accidents

1979	-	60,000	
1985	-	<u>28,000</u>	
		32,000	fewer accidents (53% decrease)

Between 1983 and 1985 there is a 60% increase in injuries involving pupils on school buses. However there is an 8% decrease in the number of school buses running, and a 53% decrease in accidents between 1979 and 1985.

Are school buses really as safe as they are claimed to be?

Compiled by:

Nancy Bauder
R4 Leavenworth, Ks.

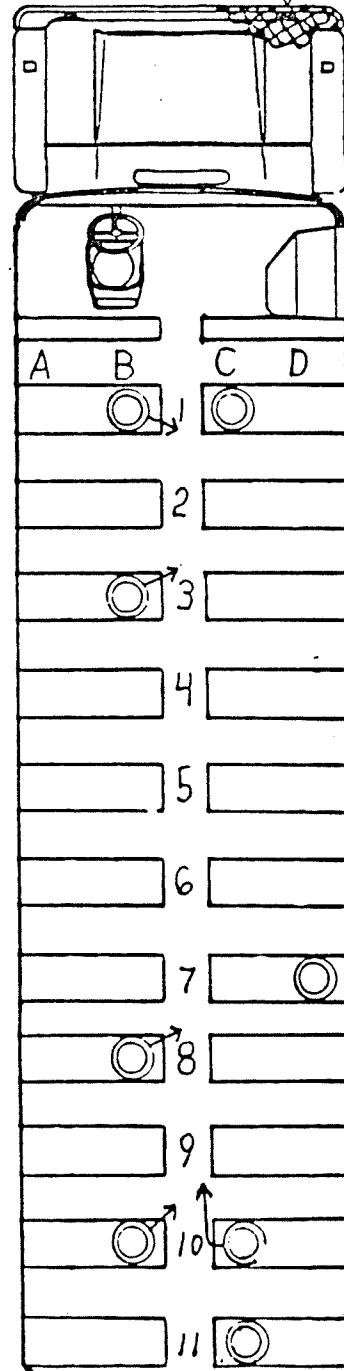
From: National Safety Council
"Accident Facts"

December 5, 1986

Principal
Direction
of Force ↓

Left Side of Bus

Right Side of Bus



Row 1 B
M-8, MAIS-1

Row 1 C
M-6, MAIS-1

Row 3 B
F-6, MAIS-1

Row 7 D
F-9, MAIS-1

Row 8 B
F-9, MAIS-1

Row 10 C
F-9, MAIS-2
Fracture of right radius
and unconscious for
unspecified time period.
Fell into aisle floor, striking
vertical seat supports of
seat ahead of her.

Row 10 B
M-10, MAIS-1

Row 11 C
F-9, MAIS-1

Special Notes:
Seating position
unknown for 38
uninjured passengers
5 students fell into
aisle.

LEGEND:

○ Uninjured
○ Injured
○ Fatally Injured

⊙ Unknown if Injured
(if belt use)

Example: M-10
Male Age 17
MAIS-1 (Used for Injured occupants only):
Maximum AIS =
Injury was
Moderate
CAIS-2, Injury

AIS Code and Injury Severity

1 - Minor	5 - Critical
2 - Moderate	6 - Moderate Injury
3 - Serious	7 - Injured, unknown severity
4 - Severe	9 - Unknown if Injured

*American Association of Automotive Medicine Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS)

2-15-87

To whom it may concern:

I have a 4 year old daughter and 2 year old twin sons. As you can see, I presently do not have children riding school buses. However, I realize the bus issue is just around the corner for me.

Our children have been in car seats since they came home from the hospital. My daughter, Amanda, already asks why she has to wear a seat belt in the car and not on a bus. I personally do not want my children's lives risked because seat belts are not installed on buses. Seat belts save lives and I want my children to have the best chance possible in an accident.

Please do your research and help us pass the seat belt for school buses' law. Please help us to protect our children.

Sincerely,

Lea Ann Wittse
Weilbacher

1407 10th Ave.
Lawrence, ks.

66048

DATE: February 17, 1987
TO: Senate Education Committee
FROM: Burdel N. Welsh, Community Relations Officer
Leavenworth County Sheriff's Department
RE: Senate Bill #179 for Safety Belts on School Buses

=====
Dear Chairperson and Committee Members:

I am currently employed as a Deputy Sheriff for the Leavenworth County Sheriff's Department, now serving as the Community Relations Officer. At the present time, I have 12 years of law enforcement experience, also being formerly employed by the Atchison County Sheriff's Department and the Kansas Bureau of Investigations.

My duties at the Sheriff Department include many aspects of child safety and includes the formation and presentation of many programs dealing with it. I feel that safety belts is a very important aspect of child safety and one that cannot be overlooked.

The State of Kansas has recognized the importance and benefits of safety belts and child restraints and has passed laws to mandate their use in automobiles. As part of public education concerning these laws, our department provides many safety belt programs from pre-school age through senior citizens.

Many times during these programs, I am asked why children are required to be in an approved child restraint seat from ages birth to 4 years and then in a safety belt in the car from then on, but not on a school bus. It is not only parents asking, but the children themselves. A child that is accustomed to using a safety belt on a regular basis will look for one when traveling in any vehicle. What is so unique about a school bus?

Another aspect of my job is accident investigation. While accidents involving school buses are certainly not the majority of accidents investigated by our department, they seem to be on the rise. While I recognize that not all crashes are survivable and that a safety belt cannot prevent all injuries, they have gone a long way in reducing serious injuries and deaths.

Given these two facts, it would seem logical that safety belts on school buses could go a long way in reducing serious injuries. How? Well, I have not been personally involved in crash testing of school buses, but I have been to several serious bus accidents.

In one of them, there was only three occupants: the driver (wearing a safety belt), her 11-year old daughter and her 4-year old daughter. On a slippery gravel road, the bus went into the ditch at a slow speed, when the driver tried to return to the roadway, the bus

PAGE 2

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partially overturned on its right side. The 4-year old was thrown partially through a broken window on the ground side of the bus, causing injuries which resulted in the amputation of one arm. After investigation, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration concluded that use of safety belts would have prevented her partial ejection and the resulting permanent injury.

Another involved the near head-on collision of a school bus and a grain truck. 26 children and one adult had to be transported to a hospital. Although there were no serious injuries, the strain this one accident placed on emergency services was heavy. Four ambulances, carrying multiple patients, had to make multiple trips. Many of these children were injured when they fell out of the seats onto the floor or each other. Safety belts would have kept them in place.

Without getting into whether or not their use should be mandated, safety belts should, at the very least, be made available for use by the children and adults who want to take advantage of their protection.

Your favorable consideration on this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

TERRY L. CAMPBELL, SHERIFF



Burdell N. Welsh, Deputy Sheriff
Community Relations Officer

TLC:BNW:jn

KANSAS
ASSOCIATION



OF
SCHOOL
BOARDS



5401 S. W. 7th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66606
913-273-3600

TESTIMONY ON S.B. 179

by

Richard Funk, Assistant Executive Director
Kansas Association of School Boards

February 17, 1987

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we appreciate the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the 302 members of the Kansas Association of School Boards. KASB is opposed to the provisions found in S.B. 179. The Delegate Assembly of the Kansas Association of School Boards is on record as opposing the mandatory installation and use of seat belts in school buses.

Aside from the many arguments concerning the inconclusive studies regarding the safety aspects of seat belts, there are also some very practical considerations. School districts must decide whether or not to make seat belt use mandatory for rides. If it is mandatory - compliance monitoring becomes a problem. If usage is not mandatory, then do not install them. Vandalism becomes a problem. Seat belts can be cut or partially cut and then must be replaced. Nationally, many school districts that have seat belts in their buses also may charge a fee for bus transportation to help defray costs. Transportation in Kansas is mandatory.

Remember that school bus safety doesn't just happen because we mandate seat belts. It is a shared responsibility of many people including school officials, bus drivers, community members and the students. It also involves all other drivers of motor vehicles. We are dealing with inconclusive evidence. Hard, factual data is not available. Let's not deal with this issue on emotion. School bus transportation is among the safest forms of transportation available today. Everyone works very hard to keep it that way. Seat belts have nothing to do with it.

Senate Education
2/17/87
Attachment 4



SB 179

Testimony presented before the Senate Education Committee
by Gerald W. Henderson, Executive Director
United School Administrators of Kansas

February 17, 1987

Mister Chairman and members of the committee. Rising in opposition to a bill designed to buckle seat belts around the state's bus riding children would on the surface appear to be a strange position for school administrators to take. The evidence presented by Mr. Ed Lindsay of Meridan causes us to believe that seat belts in buses cause more safety problems for kids than they solve.

Mr. Lindsay and his association of transportation people have made extensive studies of all aspects of school bus safety. We share their concern about seat belts in school buses and would ask that you report SB 179 unfavorably.

Senate Education
2/17/87
Attachment 5

ON BEHALF OF THE KANSAS STATE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, I HOPE THAT YOU WILL HELP DEFEAT ANY LEGISLATION FOR SEAT BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES. WE ARE OPPOSED TO THIS LEGISLATION BECAUSE AS THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH POINTS OUT, BELTS AND COMPARTMENTALIZATION DO NOT WORK TOGETHER.

1. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA 1968 CRASH TEST
"THE LEAST INJURIES OCCURRED TO PASSENGERS WHO WERE UNSECURED IN THE BUS"
2. NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ADMINISTRATION 1968 - 1974
"THOSE CRASH TESTS CONCLUDED THAT PASSENGERS SECURED TO BENCH SEATS BY LAP BELTS SUFFERED THE MOST SEVERE INJURIES IN THE EVENT OF COLLISION"
3. NATIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE RESEARCH FOUNDATION 1972
"CONDUCTED 200 CRASH TESTS WITH SEAT BELTS AND CONCLUDED THAT AT LEAST 40 INCHES OF UNOBSTRUCTED AREA MUST EXIST IN FRONT OF BELTED PASSENGER IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE PASSENGER FROM FRONTAL IMPACT" (SEATS IN BUSES ARE USUALLY SPACED 22 TO 28 INCHES APART)
4. THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR AUTOMOTIVE MEDICINE ADVISED IN 1975, AGAINST SECURING YOUNG CHILDREN SOLELY BY LAP BELTS.
5. VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE FOUND: "THAT SEAT BELTS IN SCHOOL BUSES ARE IMPRACTICAL"
6. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL COMMISSIONED SOUTHWEST RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO STUDY SEAT BELTS IN BUSES IN 1976. THEY CONCLUDED:
 - A. AUTOMOBILES ARE DIFFERENT THAN BUSES.
 - B. RELEASE OF PASSENGERS FROM BUSES IN MAJOR ACCIDENTS FROM OUTSIDE WAS IMPRACTICAL.
 - C. THE AMOUNT OF TIME REQUIRED TO ENSURE USE BY THE DRIVER OR AIDE WOULD BE PROHIBITIVE.
 - D. VANDALISM TO BELTS, AND BELTS BEING USED AS WEAPONS, MADE THEM IMPRACTICAL.
7. THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT INSURORS 1974
"MAJOR QUESTIONS UNANSWERED ABOUT LIABILITY"
8. NATIONAL SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION 1974-1976
"STATED COST, HAZARD, ENFORCEMENT, VANDALISM, AND ATTITUDINAL FACTOR AS REASONS TO BE AGAINST BELTS ON BUSES"
9. CANADIAN GOVERNMENT 1985
 - A. COMPARTMENTALIZATION PROVIDES EXCELLENT PROTECTION.
 - B. THE USE OF LAP BELTS MAY RESULT IN MORE SEVERE HEAD AND NECK INJURIES.
10. THOMAS BUILT BUS COMPANY 1985
COMPARTMENTALIZATION APPEARS TO WORK AS DESIGNED AND SEAT BELTS WOULD NOT MAKE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE

Senate Education
2/17/87
Attachment 6

11. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND NATIONAL HIGHWAY SAFETY ADMINISTRATION JUNE OF 1985
 - A. SCHOOL BUSES ARE THE SAFEST FORM OF SURFACE TRANSPORTATION.
 - B. NHSTA BOARD, ON EXTENSIVE RESEARCH CONCLUDED IN 1977 THAT COMPARTMENTALIZATION IS AN "AUTOMATIC" SYSTEM TO PROTECT CHILDREN EFFECTIVELY IN SCHOOL BUSES WITHOUT REQUIRING SAFETY BELTS.
 - C. ALL AVAILABLE TEST DATA AND REAL WORLD ACCIDENT DATA INDICATE THAT THIS CONCEPT HAS WORKED EXTREMELY WELL.
 - D. THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD REVIEWED THIS MATTER IN 1983 AND FOUND CURRENT STANDARDS APPEAR TO BE EFFECTIVE IN ELIMINATING OR SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCING THE MAJORITY OF SCHOOL BUS PASSENGER INJURIES. " WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT FEDERAL REQUIREMENT FOR SAFETY BELTS IN LARGE SCHOOL BUSES IS WARRANTED."

ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSING SEAT BELTS IN LARGE BUSES

1. KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS
2. KANSAS STATE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
3. KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS
4. KANSAS UNITED SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION
2. NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
3. CANADIAN GOVERNMENT
4. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
5. ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL

YOUR HELP IN DEFEATING ANY LEGISLATION FOR SEAT BELTS IN LARGE SCHOOL BUSES WOULD BE VERY INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING TO PREVENT POSSIBLE INJURIES AND DEATHS.

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PUPIL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
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SCHOOL BUS SAFETY - WHAT ARE THE REAL ISSUES?

APRIL 1986

Within the past three years the movement of seat belt usage has gained momentum and spread to include school buses. But the necessity of seat belt usage in cars is not the issue of this article. Two studies have recently addressed the issue of seat belts in school buses: Transport Canada (frontal collision) and Thomas Test (side & frontal collision), which acted as a follow-up for the Transport Canada Test.

Research shows that the compartmentalization concept, consisting of high-backed, heavily padded, properly spaced seats, and other factors, provides greater safety than do seat belts. The Transport Canada Test showed that "unlike passenger cars, whose more aggressive interior, lower mass and more severe deceleration behavior makes seat belts essential for occupant safety, the school bus presents a different problem for occupant protection. Instead, the occupant safety in school buses is better improved through passive protection, including the use of high-backed, heavily padded, closely spaced seats. Because of this compartmentalization concept, and the controlled seat spacing, students tend to sit more upright on the seats. In the event of a collision, the occupant slides forward into the back of the seat in front. This results in the forces being spread more evenly over the upper torso than they would be if the occupant were restrained by seat belts." ¹

The National Highway Safety Administration in 1977 ordered compartmentalization in new buses in lieu of mandatory seat belts beginning with 1978 model year. This federal regulation is still in

effect. Both the Transport Canada and Thomas Test results confirm that compartmentalization provides excellent protection for occupants. The tests also show that the use of lap seat belts in any buses may result in more severe head and neck injuries for belted occupants than unbelted.² These results will help in deciding the issue of seat belt usage because now the issue can be addressed from a scientific rather than emotional viewpoint.

Statistics prove that more fatalities happen outside the school bus than inside.³ The following are the real problems of school bus safety. Children retrieving dropped possessions are hit by the bus. Children passing behind the bus out of the driver's line of vision are backed over by the bus. Children are hit by other vehicles who don't stop for the red lights or stop sign of the bus. Children are hit by other vehicles while they are gathered at their bus stops.

Some solutions to alleviate these problems would be better instructions of vehicle safety to students and required use of book bags or other method of possession control. Legislation should be passed for stronger prosecution of violaters of stop arm laws. There needs to be an increase in public awareness of school buses. Most importantly there needs to be increased driver training for school bus drivers.

Rep. Kostmayer introduced a bill to provide \$10,000,000 per year to states that enact laws mandating use of seat belts in school buses.⁴ If this money is available why not put it to the best use for our children? Let us resolve the significant number of proven dangers associated with the outside of the bus before resolving the virtually untested problems inside/ or worse yet create new dangers inside the bus, as the recent Transport Canada and Thomas Test clearly shows.

Even with these problems, the school bus is by far the safest mode of mass ground transportation in the US, 8 times safer than the family car.⁵ The state of Kansas has an outstanding safety record. Since 1971 only one student fatality outside a school bus and no student fatalities inside a school bus has occurred.⁶ A lot of hard work has gone toward this record. Transportation people are safety conscious and, with the help of monies made available and legislation that addresses the real problems of school bus safety, can continue this record.

EDWARD J. LINDSAY
VICE PRESIDENT
KANSAS STATE PUPIL
TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION

¹ "Seat Belts or Passive Protection", results of Transport Canada Test, School Bus Fleet, June/July 1985, p.16

² "The Thomas Test Confirms Canadian Results", results of Thomas Test, School Bus Fleet, June/July 1985, p.22

³ National Loading & Unloading Survey, from Kansas Department of Transportation

⁴ "School Bus Safety", American School & University, Oct.1985, p.49

⁵ Same as 2.

⁶ Statistics from Kansas Department of Transportation