Approved: April 9, 1997
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ben Vidricksen at 9:05 a.m. on February 18, 1997, 1997 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Emalene Correll, Legislative Research Department
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes
Marian Holeman, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Senator Rich Becker
Helen Stephens
Laura Robson
Ed Redman
Meg Henson
Chad Summers
Terri Roberts, J.D., R.N.
Barbara Pringle
Evelyn Davis
Melvin Wedermyer
Ted Sinclair
Karen Lowery
Brilla Scott

Others attending: See attached list

SB 180 CONCERNING SCHOOL BUSES - REQUIRING SEAT BELTS

Because committees have been given fewer days in which to hold hearing, the Chair advised that conferees should keep remarks brief and members should hold questions until all conferee presentation were complete.Following conferees appeared before the committee in support of **SB 180**: Senator Rich Becker, (Attachment 1); Helen Stephens representing the Kansas Sheriffs Association (KSA) (Attachment 2). Laura Robson, Kansas PTA written testimony not available. She advised that safety issues are always a priority for PTA. The National PTA has requested Federal standards for installation of seat belts on all new school buses. Requested favorable passage of this bill. Ed Redman, Kansas State Fire Fighters Association (Attachment 3); and Meg Henson, Director of Government Affairs, Kansas Medical Society (Attachment 4) spoke briefly supporting the bill.

Chad Summers, Senator Rich Becker's Intern, provided additional background data and discussed the problems with the current "compartmentalization concept" safety standard in school buses, primarily in relation to "roll over" accidents (Attachment 5). Mr. Summers advised that he has compiled considerable research on the subject of school bus safety and seat belts and would be happy to share it with anyone who is interested. Terri Roberts, J.D., R.N., Executive Director, Kansas State Nurses Association added their support for the bill (Attachment 6).

Barbara Pringle, Executive Secretary, Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association, appeared to discuss concerns with **SB 180** - the mandatory installation and use of seat belts on school buses. Ms. Pringle provided the Association's view of the passive compartmentalization restraint system as well as additional information regarding school bus safety features and data to confirm the present safety features of school buses (Attachment 7). Ms. Pringle asked members to pay particular attention to the report from the National Highway Safety Administration.

Evelyn Davis, Member of Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association, also provided testimony opposing the bill; citing the fact that at this time there is no safety group which conclude seat belts increase passenger safety on school buses (Attachment 8). Members viewed a short video on compartmentalization. The

Pennsylvania Association prepared the video which contained clips of crash testing. Members were urged to spend funds for safety on where the accidents occur - loading and unloading. The Chair reminded members that **SB-139** deals with these issues.

Brilla Scott, Kansas United School Administrators spoke unfavorably on the bill and provided additional study reports supporting the Administrators' opposition (Attachment 9). Melvin Wedermyer, USD #489, Hays, KS., Director of School Transportation and former Highway Patrol supervisor stated that in his opinion the lap seat belts mandated by this bill will create more problems and be more dangerous for children. He referred members to previously cited studies. (No written testimony). Ted Sinclair, Transportation Supervisor, Derby, KS, related his District's experience when they experimented with seat belts in buses. It was not good and they had to remove them (Attachment 10). Karen Lowery, Coordinator of Governmental Relations, Kansas Association of School Boards, provided testimony in opposition to this bill (Attachment 11).

Discussion revealed that at this time all large buses in the State of Kansas are the compartmentalized type. It is estimated that installation of belts will cost up to $2,000 per bus. Members were reminded Chad Summers' testimony included a "question and answer sheet" which answered many of the questions raised in discussion.

SB 131: USE OF SCHOOL BUSES FOR OTHER THAN PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

Barbara Pringle, Executive Secretary, Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association, advised that her school system is interested in this bill. They would like to be able to do things for the community which the bill would allow and are in favor of **SB 131**. Karen Lowery, Kansas Association of School Boards, appeared in support of the bill as it will allow local boards of education to make decisions for their own districts (Attachment 12). Senator Karr, who introduced this legislation, concurred with the preceding statements and asked committee support for this bill.

Senator Goodwin proposed an amendment to define the beginning of "12 year period after which a bus cannot be used in accordance with legislation which will take effect in 1998; i.e. date of manufacture plate on the bus door vs. date of purchase. It was clarified that the referenced law referred to meeting safety standards that are changed not the useful life of the bus. Buses would have to be retrofitted within 12 years to meet new safety standards or the bus would have to be disposed of. Any bus that meets all the standards that are in placecan be driven forever if it continues to meet safety standards. Senator Goodwin withdrew her motion.

Passage of the bill would have no fiscal impact (Attachment 13). Senator Harrington moved to recommend **SB 131** favorable for passage. Senator Karr seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 1997.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 1997

NAME	REPRESENTING
Jim Sullinger	KC STAR
R. Lipsey	AP
Britta Highfill Scott	USA
Laura Robson	Kansas PTA
Melvin Wedermyer	USD #489, Hays, KS
Karen Mellor	KASB
Ed Redmon	Ks Fire Fighters
Tom Whitaker	Ks Motor Carriers Assn.
Emil Lane	Senate Majority Leader
Karen Donaldson	Sen. Praeger
Veryl Peter	KS. St. Dept. of Ed.
Helen Stephens	KSA (Ks. Sheriffs Assoc)
LARRY BLATHART	KS. Dept. of Ed.
Terri Roberts	Kansas State Nurses
Jack Wood	Ks. State Pupil Assn.
Bonnie Garrow	ESU Division of Nursing
Janice Billings	ESU Division of Nursing
Susa Martin	ESU Division of Nursing
Teri Lange	ESU Division of Nursing

SENATE TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 1997

NAME	REPRESENTING
Betty McBride	KDOR
Rick Becker	Senate
Nancy Becker	
Chad Summers	Sen. Beckers Intern
Meg Henderson	KMS
Rick Scheibe	KDOR
W. Sanders	Gov's office
Steve BASKA	OVERLAND PARK SUN
Jetta Jennings	USD-480 & KSPTA Liberal, Ks. 67901
Evelyn Davis	KSPTA

STATE OF KANSAS

SE.. ..TOR RICH BECKER
KANSAS 9TH DISTRICT
9225 WOODSTONE LANE
LENEXA, KANSAS 66219
913-894-9530

STATE CAPITOL
ROOM 143-N
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504
(913) 296-7382
1-800-432-3924 (LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE DURING SESSION)

TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
VICE CHAIRMAN: ELECTIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INSURANCE
PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

Thank you Senator Vidrickson.

I'm here today to talk about children's safety. As a parent and now a grandparent I'm concerned about the safety of the 200,000 children who ride school buses to and from school each day in Kansas.

Schools have the responsibility to be sure children are safe at school as well as to and from school, and, I see it as our ultimate responsibility as legislators to make sure the buses carrying these students are as safe as possible. Many habits good and bad are formed at young ages.

We send the wrong message to children when we ask them to buckle up for their own safety in a car and on airplanes, but not on a school bus.

Two trips a day, each weekday, for about 9 months of the year on a school bus with no seat belts is a powerfully negative learning experience and message that we send.

I've had people tell me that this issue is relatively insignificant and the buses are safe because less than 100 kids are hurt in bus accidents in Kansas in an average year. To them I say, two things -- FIRST: The schools have a responsibility for the safety of children at school, and also on the way to and on the way home from school and SECOND: If your child or grandchild is the one who gets hurt or is killed as a result of a school bus accident you would be and should be very concerned. Especially if every common sense safety measure is not taken.

Current safety standards work well, but only in a limited scope of accidents. By mandating the use of seat belts, SB-180 takes a step toward making the trip our children take every morning and afternoon as safe as can be.

Thank you, I'd be happy to answer any questions.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 1

1-1

KANSAS SHERIFFS ASSOCIATION

February 18, 1997
Senate Transportation Committee
Senate Bill 180

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Helen Stephens, representing the Kansas Sheriffs Association (KSA).

We are here to support SB 180. Seat belts are an important tool in driving safety. We have laws that require seat belts in our passenger cars for children. It is only logical to expand their use to school buses; to protect the most precious product of Kansas -- its children.

Although bus accidents in Kansas are considered "rare", why wait until a disaster strikes? Seat belts have proven to reduce serious injury and death.

The committee might consider extending the implementation date to January 1, 1999, so there is a better timeline for the proper frameworks to be manufactured. We believe proper training and use of seat belts on buses will carry over to a lifetime of use. It would also end the confusion for children that they must use their seat belt in a car, but not a school bus.

We urge you to give favorable consideration to Senate Bill 180.

Thank you for this opportunity. I would stand for questions.

KANSAS STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

TESTIMONY OF EDWARD C. REDMON
KANSAS STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.
SENATE 180

February 18, 1997

I want to thank this Committee for allowing me the opportunity to testify before you today concerning Senate Bill 180. My name is Ed Redmon and I am representing the Kansas State Firefighters Association.

As the representative for the Kansas State Firefighters Association we are always supportive of any legislation that will further insure the health and safety of our children, they are our future. We are confident that you, our legislators, would not mandate anything that is not in the best interest of our children, therefore, we would support any and all efforts to do everything possible to protect the children of Kansas from unnecessary injury.

Thank you for your time.

KMS

KANSAS MEDICAL SOCIETY

February 18, 1997

To: Senate Transportation Committee

From: Meg Henson
Director of Government Affairs

Subj: SB 180 - Requiring Seat Belts on School Buses

The Kansas Medical Society appreciates the opportunity to appear in support of SB 180, which would require all school buses purchased on or after the effective date of this act to be equipped with lap belt seat belts.

KMS believes that public safety dictates that seat belts be installed in school buses. Kansas requires every new passenger vehicle to be equipped with seat belts (K.S.A. 8-1749). We require each front seat passenger in a car to wear their seat belt when the car is in motion (K.S.A. 8-2503). We even require every driver who transports a child under 14 years of age to properly secure that child in either a child passenger restraining system (children under 4) or a safety belt (children 4-13)(K.S.A. 8-1344). Drivers must secure their children in these ways when driving them to school. Yet, if the child rides to school in a school bus rather than in a car, he or she is not even given the option of using a seat belt. It is in the school setting that many children are taught the importance of safety belts, and it seems somewhat ironic that bus-riding students are not given the opportunity to put into practice what they have been taught when riding the school bus.

KMS encourages school bus manufacturers to continue their efforts to improve the safety of school buses and of school bus transportation programs. This includes teaching students and drivers about the importance of seat belts and their proper usage.

Thank you for considering our comments. I would be happy to answer questions.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 4

4-1

623 SW 10th Ave. • Topeka KS 66612-1627 • 913.235.2383 • 800.332.0156 • FAX 913.235.5114
Western Kansas office • 311 E 25th St. • Hays KS 67601 • 913.625.8215 • 800.293.2363 • FAX 913.625.8234

Testimony Before the
Senate Committee on Transportation and Tourism
by
Chad Summers

February 18,1997

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 180 offers concerned Kansans assurance that their children will be as safe as possible every time the step onto a new school bus. Opponents of this legislation will contend that school bus transportation is already unbelievably safe and offer that safety features such as compartmentalization and reinforced joint structures provide the safest possible ride that Kansas schoolchildren can find. While no one could seriously argue that school buses are unsafe, it is apparent that there is room for improvement.

Compartmentalization is the concept that while contained in the "compartment of safety" provided by the seats on the school bus children will receive adequate protection from injury due to collision. Advocates of the status quo will surely let you know that most accidents are front-end collisions and that in these situations the compartment of safety currently provided gives outstanding protection. Unfortunately there is one slight problem. If the child is removed from the compartment, he/she is not protected. An accident in Reno, Nevada in 1987 illustrates this point. Eighty-two children were injured when the brakes on the bus failed and it rear ended another bus. Apparently when the passengers realized that there was a problem, they stood up to see what was the matter. By standing up, they removed themselves from the compartment and received no protection. Having been restrained in their seats would have guaranteed that those children would have received the full protection of the "compartment of safety". In rollover accidents, which account for 50% of all school bus occupant deaths, the child will likewise be ejected from the compartment of safety.

The effectiveness of safety belts in these type of accidents can be seen in an example that hits a little closer to home. Six years ago a bus carrying Kansas City preschoolers was struck from the side, which caused it to roll over and to ignite. All of the passengers were belted. The result: sixteen of the seventeen children on board were uninjured.

Moreover, this legislation provides for more than just safety in the event of an accident. Before you is written testimony from Dr. Ed Christopherson, a behavioral psychologist with Children's Mercy Hospital, noting the improved behavior of restrained schoolchildren. With fewer distractions from passengers, bus drivers can be more aware of the driving scene around them.

Kansas parents are concerned about the safety of their children, and are watching to see the message that this body sends them. Let them know that you are as concerned about the well being and safety of their children as they are. Before returning the floor to the chair, I would like to add that I have compiled extensive research on this subject, and if any member of this committee has any unanswered questions after hearing today's testimonies, I would consider it a privilege to help them find the answer.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions.

STATE OF KANSAS

SENATOR RICH BECKER
KANSAS 9TH DISTRICT
9225 WOODSTONE LANE
LENEXA, KANSAS 66219
913-894-9530

STATE CAPITOL
ROOM 143-N
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504
(913) 296-7382
1-800-432-3924 (LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE DURING SESSION)

TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT:
VICE CHAIRMAN: ELECTIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INSURANCE
PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS REGARDING SAFETY BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES

Q. HOW MANY KIDS ARE KILLED ON SCHOOL BUSES EACH YEAR? U.S.

A. An average of 10 to 12 kids a year are killed while passengers of school buses and 5 adult drivers or passengers die while occupants of school buses.

Q. HOW MANY KIDS ARE INJURED ON SCHOOL BUSES EACH YEAR?

A. According to Transportation Research Board, special Report #222, 11,400 injuries occur inside of the school bus each year.

Q. WOULD SAFETY BELTS SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THESE NUMBERS?

A. Definitely, Special Report #222 estimates that 50% usage of seat belts on school buses would reduce injuries by 20%. Unseated students, such as standees or improperly seated students are likely to receive more serious injuries.

Q. WHAT ARE THE CURRENT SAFETY SPECIFICATIONS INSIDE THE SCHOOL BUS?

A. Compartmentalization is the term used to describe the current safety specifications inside of a school bus. This concept was created to describe surrounding the passenger in a "compartment of safety". Thirty years ago this concept came about as a result of a study done by UCLA. Originally, compartmentalization included 28" high seat backs, padded arms at one end of the seats to keep students from falling into the aisles, and lap style seat belts to maintain the passenger in this cocoon of safety. Federal standards implemented in 1977 produced an incredibly watered down version of this concept, removing completely the components of padded arms and seat belts.

Q. WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS WITH COMPARTMENTALIZATION?

A. Compartmentalization would work well if collisions were always simple

front end collisions. However, most accidents are not that simple in nature. While 56% of bus accidents are front enders, 35.3% of these front enders result in rollovers. Fully 50% of all occupant fatalities result from rollover accidents. The problem is that compartmentalization bases its protection on the fact that the passenger will stay protected as long as he/she remains in that "compartment of safety". Yet, when a passenger is ejected from the "compartment", they receive no protection. In a broadside or rollover type collision the force of the accident will remove the passenger from this compartment of safety.

Q. HOW MANY KANSAS SCHOOL CHILDREN RIDES THE BUS?

A. About 208,000 every day!

Q. HOW MUCH WILL IT COST TO HAVE NEW SCHOOL BUSES FITTED WITH SAFETY BELTS?

A. Approximately $1500.00. EACH

KANSAS LEGISLATURE
FEBRUARY, 1997

Dr. Edward Christophersen, Children's Mercy Hospital
DISCUSSION OF SEAT BELTS IN SCHOOL BUSES

Vehicular crashes in the U.S. are the leading cause of:

1) infant and child deaths (more children die from vehicular incidents than the 10 leading diseases combined)

2) non-congenital mental retardation

3) epilepsy

4) brain injury and permanent spinal cord injury

In 1977, I published a research study, conducted at the University of Kansas Medical Center, on the advantages of properly restraining toddlers when traveling by automobile. In my subsequent research over the next five years, we demonstrated that children who are properly restrained:

1) behave better than children traveling unrestrained;

2) sleep better while traveling

3) experience less motion sickness

4) are much less likely to be injured in a non-crash event (falling within or out of the vehicle)

The bill before the Kansas Legislature that would require the installation and use of seat belts in school buses can save untold cost and misery to our State's children. Most of us are now using seats belts because, after years of hard work by dedicated professionals, as well as our own experience, we now realize that it is safer to wear seat belts. We now have the opportunity to extend this added safety to the children in our State who travel by school bus. I sincerely hope that concern for children out weights any political concerns.

5-5

Reprinted from PEDIATRICS 60:69-74, 1977

Children's Behavior During Automobile Rides: Do Car Seats Make a Difference?

Edward R. Christophersen, Ph.D.

From the Department of Pediatrics, Kansas University Medical Center, Kansas City

ABSTRACT. The behavior of children riding in automobiles with their mothers was assessed by having an observer accompany them on repeated 15-minute automobile rides. Children riding in car seats exhibited very high levels of appropriate or safe behavior, whereas children not riding in car seats exhibited very low levels of appropriate behavior. When car seats were introduced to those children who previously had not used them, the level of appropriate behavior improved dramatically. These results were maintained at three-month follow-up observations.

Prevention or reduction of disruptive child behavior on car rides is an obviously important, but previously unreported, benefit of the use of child restraint seats. This fact might very well be used by the pediatrician to further encourage or persuade parents to purchase and use child restraint seats. The use of a child restraint seat to reduce disruptive behavior during automobile rides is an advantage, beyond the safety aspects, of introducing car seats to young children. *Pediatrics* 60:69-74, 1977, AUTOMOBILE SAFETY, CHILD AUTOMOBILE RESTRAINT SEATS, PARENT COUNSELING, BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS.

Within the past decade, startling statistics have been reported regarding the number of injuries to children riding in automobiles involved in accidents or panic stops.[1-4] A corollary finding reported by Pless et al.[5] and Robertson et al.,[6] and of concern to professionals charged with the welfare of children, has been that a strikingly small number of parents are actually providing adequate protection for their children during automobile transit. Considering the time and effort that have gone into the evaluation of protective car seats for children,[7-11] one would think parents would be devoted consumers of these safety restraints. As noted above, however, such is not the case.

To ameliorate this problem, Bass and Wilson[12] have examined the role that the physician can play in encouraging parents to purchase and use car restraints. They reported that by spending several minutes with parents, the physician could increase seat belt usage. Unfortunately, the authors used only self-report data.

In the past, efforts by professionals concerned with increasing the use of car restraint systems, the automobile industry, and federal regulatory agencies have been devoted to educating consumers regarding safety. Parents have been enjoined to purchase and use car seats so that their children would be protected in the event of an accident. It is possible that this strategy has been ineffective because too many parents have wrongly perceived the chances of their becoming involved in an automobile accident as unlikely or remote.

Behavioral scientists have repeatedly suggested that behavior change can quickly be achieved by providing incentives and immediate rewards for altered behavior.[13] Such methods seem superior to merely providing threats about negative consequences for continued inappropriate behavior when conceptualized from such a perspective. The task of changing parental consumer behavior

Received November 4, 1976; revision accepted for publication February 14, 1977.
Supported in part by grants from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HDO 3144, NICHD & NIMH 26124) and General Motors Love Seat Division.
ADDRESS FOR REPRINTS: Department of Pediatrics, 215 H. C. Miller Building, University of Kansas Medical Center, 39th and Rainbow Boulevard, Kansas City, KS 66103.

American Academy of Pediatrics

Kansas Chapter

Chapter President
Dennis M. Cooley, MD
3500 SW 6th
Topeka, KS 66606
913/235-0335

Chapter Vice President
Robert Cox, MD
2220 Canterbury
Hays, KS 67601
913/623-5372

Chapter Treasurer
J. Edgar Rosales, MD
Mowery Clinic
737 E Crawford
Salina, KS 67401-5102
913/827-7261

Chapter Administrator
Chris Steege
15202 W 84th Terrace
Lenexa, KS 66219-1810
913/894-5649
Fax 913/894-5649

January 7, 1997

Chad Summers
Senator Rich Becker office
Topeka, Ks

Dear Mr. Summers:

The Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics has read the Senate Bill requiring seat belts in school buses submitted by Sen. Rich Becker. The Chapter will be endorsing this bill and has attached, for your reference, a copy of the National American Academy of Pediatrics policy regarding School Bus Safety.

The Kansas Chapter of AAP would like to keep its members up-to-date on this bill. You may call Chris Steege, our Executive Director, at the Chapter office with any changes or updates.

Please feel free to contact the Kansas Chapter with any questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Cooley, MD
Kansas Chapter President

American Academy of Pediatrics

Policy Statement: School Bus Safety

(RE5044)

In 1970, the American Academy of Pediatrics, in a supplement to *Pediatrics*, reviewed the laws, regulations, and practices in school busing in the United States.[1] This survey was carried out by Physicians for Automotive Safety. The information available at that time (from 46 states) indicated that 14,709,000 students were being transported in a total of 203,994 vehicles.[1] Recent data now indicate that approximately 22 million pupils are transported daily to and from schools in the United States in nearly 400,000 school buses.[2]

Based in part on the recommendations resulting from the 1970 survey, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in February 1973 issued the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS-222), which became effective in April 1977. That standard prescribed passive protection for school bus passengers and looked specifically at: 1) the seat and seat anchorage strength; 2) the seat and restraining barrier height and surface area; and 3) padding on surfaces within occupants' head space.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration subsequently has denied a petition from Physicians for Automotive Safety that the FMVSS-222 include requirements for anchorages for seat belts. Seat belts presently are required in vehicles weighing 10,000 pounds or less with a maximum passenger capacity of 16. Seat belts are not required for larger school buses.

The primary reason given for not requiring seat belts in buses weighing more than 10,000 pounds is that the number of "inside bus fatalities" nationally does not justify the expense and maintenance of seat belts. However, in 1982 there were 140 deaths resulting from school bus accidents. Included in this total were 60 pupils, 5 bus drivers and 75 "others." In addition, there were 7,000 reported injuries: 4,200 of those injured were students.[3] Therefore, should the number of deaths alone not justify changes, the potential for a reduction in the number of injuries, and/or in the seriousness of those injuries, would seem to make further changes in FMVSS-222 highly desirable.

Unsupported arguments have been presented in an effort to prevent seat belt installation on school buses. Among these are:

1. Children can't handle the buckle adequately. (The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that all children, given their familiarity with seat belts and buckles, should be able to satisfactorily buckle and unbuckle seat belts.)

2. The buckles would entrap children and could leave them dangling from the ceiling in accidents in which the bus is overturned. (This is true, but it is still preferable for children to be strapped in rather than thrown out of the seat or the vehicle at the time of an accident.)

3. Wearing seat belts would produce internal injuries. (With the restraints presently available, any school aged child can safely wear a seat belt.)

4. Children could use the belts as weapons. (Children have much better weapons available, including lunch boxes and books. In addition, the newer, lightweight, smaller, retractable seat belts now available are unlikely to be effective as weapons.)

Based on a review of the available and extensive data, the American Academy of Pediatrics supports the following changes in School Bus Safety Standards:

1. Seat backs should be elevated to 28 inches. This is four inches above the height now mandated by federal regulations and will support and cushion a child's head and neck.

2. All seat backs and tops should be padded with firm materials that adequately absorbs impact. The padding should completely cover the entire rear of the seat in addition to the top rail. The padding also should be placed on all stanchions and "modesty panels." Seat construction should be designed to eliminate sharp or unyielding objects that could cause or worsen injury.

3. Seat belts should be required on all *new ly-manufactured* school buses—regardless of their size and the number of pupils transported.

4. Adequate and appropriate bus driver training should be mandatory in all school districts and should include provision for health screening on a periodic basis, including vision and hearing evaluations.

References:
[1] Charles S. Sheiness A: *How Safe Is Pupil Transportation? Study of Laws, Regulations, and Practices in School Busing in the United States Carried Out by Physicians for Automotive Safety.* Supplement to *Pediatrics* January 1970. Part II. 45:1
[2] Protection for School Bus Occupants. Issue Paper. U.S. Department of Transportation. September 1981; 83:39-46
[3] National Safety Council: School Bus Accidents. 1982. *Accident Facts.* 1983 ed., Chicago, IL, p. 92.

***Date of approval by Executive Board:* October 1984**
***Date of publication:* February 1985**
Reaffirmed 2/89

254-E

KANSAS STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION

700 SW Jackson, Suite 601
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3731

913/233-8638 * FAX 913/233-5222

the Voice of Nursing in Kansas

Betty Smith-Campbell, Ph.D., R.N.
President

Terri Roberts, J.D., R.N.
Executive Director

For More Information Contact
Terri Roberts J.D., R.N.
Executive Director
Kansas State Nurses Association
(913) 233-8638

February 18, 1997

S.B. 180 SEAT BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES

Senator Vidrickson and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, my name is Terri Roberts J.D., R.N. and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas State Nurses Association. We are pleased to be here today to testify on S.B. 180 which makes provisions for seat belts in school buses.

The professional organization is very supportive of the changes being proposed regarding restraining the children of Kansas transportated each day to and from school in buses. Nationwide their are over 23 million children riding school buses to school.

This is not the first time this issues has been in front of the Kansas legislature. The last time the issue was debated in both houses the provision for safety belts in school buses was removed from a second conference committee report in 1993 (HB 2036).

We encourage your support of S.B. 180 and ask that you pass the bill out favorably for passage.

Thank you.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 6

6-1

Kansas Senate Transportation Committee

Chairman
Senator Ben Vidricksen

Senate Bill # 180

February 18, 1997

Presented By

Barbara Pringle
Executive Secretary
Kansas State Pupil
Transportation Association
P. O. Box 1504
Emporia Kansas 66801
Wk 316-341-2218
Hm 316-342-4009

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 7

On behalf of the Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association I would like to express our concern with Senate Bill # 180, the mandatory installation and use of seat belts on school buses.

School buses are the safest form of ground transportation according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the National Safety Council. One of the major reasons for their outstanding safety record is their stringent construction standards. School buses must meet strict Federal motor vehicle safety standards designed to provide the school passengers with high levels of safety should a crash occur. One of those standards is the School bus passenger Seating and Crash Protection or compartmentalization. NHTSA believes that compartmentalization provides the highest level of safety and does not support the use of seat belts on school buses. That opinion is shared by the National Academy of Science., the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, The National Safety Council, The National Association for Pupil Transportation, the National Transportation Safety Board and the National School Transportation Association.

Crash testing conducted by NHTSA, Transport Canada and the National Academy of Science do not support the use of seat belts in school buses. Since the testing completed by UCLA the passive restraint system or compartmentalization has been required in all school buses.

Passive restraint systems, such as compartmentalization do not require the passenger to buckle up or for someone to constantly monitor, checking if the system is properly adjusted and fastened as this legislation requires of seat belts.

Seat belts on school buses may actually cause more severe neck or head injuries as a result of the child being thrust forward toward the seat back in front of him as he pivots at the hips where the seat belt is anchored.

The passive compartmentalization restraint system includes high, well-padded seat backs and proper seat spacing, the child is thrown forward into the seat back, but the force is distributed along the chest resulting in less sever injury or none at all.

The National Academy of Science conducted a comprehensive study and investigation of the principal causes of fatalities and injuries to school children riding in school buses and other measures that may improve school bus safety. Their purpose was to "determine those safety measures that are most effective in protecting the safety of school children while boarding, leaving and riding in the school bus. Special Report No. 222 was issued in May 1989.

I have included a copy of School Bus Safety Report dated May 1993. This includes information about Report No 222 and their recommendation that funds could be better spent on other school bus safety devices that could save more lives and reduce more injuries since children are at greater risk of being killed in school bus loading zones.

I have a short video to show you as I believe it will make the compartmentalization concept clearer. I have edited out some sections that refer to the difficulties that a driver would have in making certain that the seat belts were properly adjusted and worn correctly. This would be an additional problem because if the belts are not worn correctly the child could be seriously injured. It would be impossible for the driver to be sure that all students were wearing their seat belts at all times. In addition if a seat belt becomes damaged that seating space would then have to left open until the seat belt was replaced or repaired.

Video "Regarding Amy" is available from the Kansas Department of Education's School Bus Safety Unit Library.

We urge you to oppose Senate Bill # 180 the mandatory installation and use of seat belts for school buses.

Thank You for allowing me to speak to you today. I hope I have given you a clearer understanding of the safety issues and seat belts on school buses.

Barbara Pringle

Barbara Pringle
February 18, 1997

National
Safety
Council

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL POLICY
on
PROTECTING PUPIL PASSENGERS IN SCHOOL BUSES

The National Safety Council supports methods and procedures that effectively provide safe transportation of pupils aboard school buses. The Council believes that until further research and testing demonstrate that pupils will be safer by the installation of seat belts in school buses, passive protection provided by compartmentalization, as required by the current (1977) federal standard on school bus seating and crash protection, protects seated pupil passengers in school buses with gross vehicle weight ratings (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds. (Compartmentalization involves protecting each passenger by the seat, the seat back, and the back of the seat or restraining barrier immediately in front of it.) The Council also recommends additional research regarding pupil passenger safety in and around school buses, especially as related to seat belts.

Approved by the Board Governmental Relations Committee, April 17, 1986
Approved by the Board of Directors, April 17, 1986

Supersedes policy approved by the
Motor Transportation Division, May 2, 1984
Executive Committee, Board of Directors, June 28, 1984
Board of Directors, October 16, 1984

SCHOOL BUSES ARE SAFER THAN EVER

School buses are the safest form of surface transportation according to the National Safety Council. They base this on statistical data received in fatalities per 100,000,000 passenger miles. School buses are safer than your family automobile, passenger trains, commercial airlines and other modes of transportation.

School bus manufacturers are building better and safer buses today than ever before. Current production models include:

1. Better structural integrity with joint strength
2. More emergency exits with side emergency doors, pushout windows, and emergency roof hatches
3. Fuel tanks have protective cages surrounding them
4. Fireblock flame retardant upholstery material on interior seat covers
5. Exterior reflective markings to better identify school buses in traffic conditions
6. Better warning light systems and exterior stop arms
7. Better and safer braking systems.

School bus drivers are better trained today and require a commercial driver's license (CDL).

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has recently effected new school bus safety standards on the following:

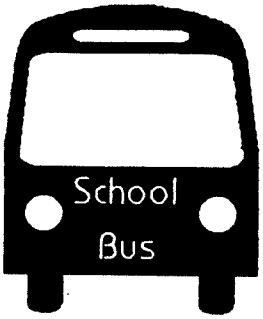
1. Mirrors
2. Emergency exit requirements
3. Seating and crash protection (wheelchair restraint systems)

The NHTSA has identified the replacement of pre-77 school buses to be the safest thing a state or school system can do to improve school bus safety. Kansas has already replaced all pre-77 school buses.

School Bus Safety Report

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

May 1993



I. Introduction

This report has been prepared to provide a summary and update of school bus safety activities conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The report discusses Congressional mandates and NHTSA's actions to improve school bus safety (which include programs affecting human behavior and motor vehicle safety performance), the magnitude of school bus-related injuries and fatalities and current agency activities to make school bus transportation even safer.

II. Background

Congress enacted the Highway Safety Act of 1966 which established a national program to reduce motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities. The legislation required the establishment of Uniform Highway Safety Program Standards around which states and communities were to organize their safety programs. Federal grants to assist states in conducting comprehensive highway safety programs were provided by this statute.

By 1972, a total of 18 program standards had been established. On several occasions since then, Congress has modified the program to provide more flexibility to the states and to permit targeting of resources on the most pressing highway safety problems. These legislative changes included restrictions on the threat of Federal sanctions against states that did not fully comply with all 18 standards (1976), authorization for the Department of Transportation to select "priority" program areas in which states would be encouraged to use Federal highway safety funds (1981), and most recently, officially changing the highway safety "standards" to "guidelines" to reflect in a more accurate way the true nature of the highway safety program (1987).

A series of highway safety program manuals was designed to be used to assist states and communities in developing highway safety program policies and procedures suggested in the original program standards. Highway Safety Program Manual #17, Pupil Transportation Safety, was designed to provide a uniform national pupil transportation safety program, and to assist the states in achieving the highest level of safety in the transportation of school children. The safety standards in that manual deal with critical aspects of school bus safety such as:

- School Bus Driver Licensing
- School Bus Driver Training
- Loading and Unloading of Pupils
- Safe Riding Behavior Instructions of Children
- School Bus Maintenance and Inspection

- School Bus Operation and Accident Records

In 1991, Guideline #17 (originally Standard #17) was updated to deal with other critical aspects of school bus operations, including emergency evacuation drills. This revision is intended to provide the latest insights into specific pupil transportation safety improvements.

In addition to program support, NHTSA developed a National Bus Driver Training Program in 1974. Provisions were made for funding school bus safety programs through a special Congressional modification of the Highway Safety Act, Section 406. Approximately $31 million was allocated to the states between fiscal years 1977 and 1982 for school bus driver training. The allocation was apportioned based on the formula used to determine Section 402 funding.

Under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Act of 1966, NHTSA was given the authority to issue Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) which must be met by vehicle manufacturers. From 1967 to 1973, the agency issued 19 safety standards that applied to school buses, covering such critical areas as brakes, glazing, seat systems and flammability. Agency actions under these two pieces of legislation increase probability of safer transportation to children using school buses.

In an effort to provide even higher levels of school bus safety, Congress, in 1974, directed the agency to establish or upgrade school bus safety standards in eight areas:

- Emergency exits
- Interior occupant protection
- Floor strength
- Seating systems
- Crashworthiness of the body and frame
- Vehicle operating systems
- Windshields and windows
- Fuel systems

As a result of the 1974 amendments, three new FMVSS were established:

FMVSS No. 220, School Bus Rollover Protection: Specified the structural resistance of buses in rollover-type accidents.

FMVSS No. 221, School Bus Body Joint Strength: Improved the body strength of buses through increased strength of the joints between panels that comprise the bus body.

FMVSS No. 222, School Bus Passenger Seating Crash Protection: Provided increased protection to passengers through a series of interior changes known as "compartmentalization" — high-backed, well-padded, and well constructed seats.

Additionally, the 1974 amendments resulted in changes to four existing safety standards:

FMVSS No. 105, Hydraulic Brake System: Increased the requirements for hydraulic brakes.

FMVSS No. 111, Rearview Mirrors: Established requirements for a "cross view" mirror to see in front of and along the side of the bus.

FMVSS No. 217, Bus Window Retention and Release: Modified the emergency exit requirements.

FMVSS No. 301, Fuel System Integrity: Established fuel system integrity requirements for school buses over 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR).

These requirements were effective for school buses manufactured on or after April 1, 1977. To meet these standards, school bus manufacturers have:

- Increased sheet metal panel seam strength
- Improved seating design (stronger, higher-backed, and better paddedseats)
- Improved hydraulic brake systems
- Added mirrors to allow the driver a better view of critical areas around the bus
- Added emergency exits to the rear and/or side of the bus
- Provided crash protection to the fuel tank and fuel systems

In 1987, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released a study on school bus crashes that occurred between August 1983 and March 1986, which involved post-April 1, 1977 school buses over 10,000 pounds GVWR. The NTSB report indicated that NHTSA's school bus standards had worked well to protect the passengers of school buses manufactured after April 1, 1977. This improvement was attributed primarily to the "compartmentalization" concept of FMVSS No. 222 that resulted in school bus passengers being well protected. The study found that only 3.6 percent of the school bus passengers involved in the NTSB selected crashes sustained more than moderate injuries or sustained only minor injuries. Most of the 13 deaths among school bus occupants in the NTSB-selected crashes (not all were pupils), resulted from severe collisions with large vehicles.

In May 1989, as required by the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (the Act), the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) issued Special Report No. 222, "Improving School Bus Safety," which covered the safety of occupants and persons boarding or exiting school buses. The report confirmed the high level of safety provided by the Nation's school bus fleet and recommended measures to improve pupil transportation safety further. The Act also required the Secretary of Transportation to review the findings of the report to determine "which safety measures are most effective in protecting the safety of school children while boarding, riding, and leaving school buses." Although all recommendations from the NAS report were deemed to have potential for reducing injuries and fatalities to users of school buses, not all were considered to be of equal merit. NHTSA issued a Federal Register notice on July 13, 1989, describing the agency's assessment of the various recommendations.

Additionally, the Act gave the Secretary of Transportation the option of designating State Highway Safety Program Funds for fiscal years 1989, 1990, and 1991 (authorized under Section 402) to be used specifically for school bus safety. Consistent with the spirit of the legislation, NHTSA set aside $4.5 million in fiscal years 1990 and 1991 to be used to implement those countermeasures deemed to be "most effective" and "effective." State and local governments responded enthusiastically by planning, programming, and obligating these funds to address identified problems.

In October 1989, NTSB issued "Crashworthiness of Small Post-Standard School Buses." This study reported on the crash performance of small post-standard school buses and vans used for school transportation. Based upon this study, NTSB issued recommendations which focused on the following issues: design of restraining barriers; feasibility of

providing lap/shoulder belts or other restraints with upper torso support for passengers; deficiencies in roof and joint strength; lack of Federal performance standards for school bus windshield retention; design of the boarding door controls in certain small school buses; and the need to correct improper installation and use of lapbelts and other restraints.

The report stated that occupants of small school buses with a GVWR under 10,000 pounds, built to standards, generally fared well in the accidents investigated. Injuries, when sustained, were usually minor and were primarily to the face, head, or lower limbs. Unrestrained and lapbelted passengers showed similar patterns of injuries. Seating position, more than restraint status, appeared to influence the severity of injuries.

In summary, NHTSA has issued school bus safety standards and continues to review the standards in light of any new information to determine if school children would benefit from additional or more stringent performance requirements. The agency believes that it is important to have pupil transportation programs that allow for safe transport of children, drivers, and other occupants of school buses.

III. Magnitude of the School Bus Problem

School bus transportation continues to be one of the safest forms of transportation. In terms of injury and fatality rates, school buses afford school children an effective and safe means of transportation to and from school and school-related activities. School buses are significantly safer than other means of transportation (mainly passenger cars) normally used by school-age children. According to the National Safety Council's *Accident Facts* (1991), in 1989, fatality rates per hundred million passenger miles were 1.12 for passenger cars and 0.04 for school buses. Also in 1989, passenger cars were involved in 72.3 percent of all traffic crashes and 61.2 percent of all fatal crashes; whereas school buses were involved in only .2 percent of all traffic crashes and in .2 percent of all fatal crashes.

Each year, however, there are crashes involving school buses, and these crashes result in injuries and, occasionally, in fatalities to school children. Whereas most school bus-involved crashes are minor, the possibility of a more serious crash or catastrophic incident still remains, such as the tragic crashes of May 1988, in Carrollton, Kentucky; the September 1989, crash in Alton, Texas; and the July 1991, crash in Palm Springs, California. While it is not suggested that the number of injuries or fatalities to school children in school bus crashes is acceptable, it is important to note that many of the school bus crashes which result in fatalities and/or serious injuries involve unique circumstances that most likely would not occur again. Developing crash specific crashworthiness countermeasures may not always be reasonable when viewed in terms of how to improve the overall effectiveness of school bus safety.

Figure 1 shows all vehicle occupant fatalities. Included are the number of preschool (0-4), school-age (5-18) children, and adults (19+) fatally injured in motor vehicle crashes in 1990, and the type of vehicle they were in at the time.

Since the definition of "school bus" differs among the various jurisdictions responsible for registering the vehicles, there is no consistent means of determining an accurate

Figure 1

Occupant Fatalities by Vehicle Type and Age Group

	Totals	Age 0-4	Age 5-12	Age 13-18	Age 19+	Unknown
Passenger Car	24,092	476	457	3,042	20,086	31
Light Truck/Van	7,387	101	164	701	6,419	2
Medium Truck	134	2	0	7	125	0
Heavy Truck	571	2	4	7	556	2
Motorcycle	3,244	2	27	310	2,904	1
School Bus	13	0	5	2	6	0
Bus (Other)	19	0	1	4	14	0
On/Off Road Vehicle	1,214	4	35	149	997	29
Other Vehicle	296	4	19	55	218	0
Unknown	164	3	4	15	141	1

Source: FARS 1990

count of the number of "school buses" transporting school children in the United States. Many publicly-owned school buses are registered as "exempt" vehicles without an annual registration, which makes accurate accounting even more difficult. Also, "school buses" as defined by some states are actually "passenger vans." The most recent available data on school buses by registrations, exposure, and accidents appear to be from the National Safety Council's survey of state departments of education and state traffic authorities. For the 1989-1990 school year, it was estimated that:

- 380,000 buses were used to transport pupils
- 22 million pupils were transported
- 21 million miles were driven per day (180 days per school year)
- 3.8 billion miles were driven

Since significant safety improvements were mandated in school buses effective April 1, 1977, available registration data suggest that about 90 percent of the school bus-type vehicles currently in operation as school buses are model year 1977 or newer.

In order to conduct an in-depth detailed assessment of school bus crashes (injuries), thorough data from each crash would be necessary. Other than information from selected crashes, such as was used in the NTSB report previously mentioned, such data are not available. However, limited data on crashes and crash injuries are available in police accident files. While not sufficiently detailed for in-depth analysis, these state police accident files provided a measure of the magnitude of the school bus injury problem. A review of some state accident files, the agency's National Accident Sampling System (NASS), and the National Safety Council

Figure 2

School Bus Involved Crashes - 1989 to 1990 School Year

Crashes Involving Another Vehicle	23,000
Crashes Into a Fixed Object	2,300
Non-Collision Crashes	500
Not Specified Type Crashes	3,200
TOTAL SCHOOL-BUS INVOLVED CRASHES	29,000
Total Number of Property Damage Only Crashes	22,000
Total Number of Pupils Injuried	9,800
Other (Pedestrians, Occupants, Other Vehicle)	4,700
Total Number of Persons Injured	14,500

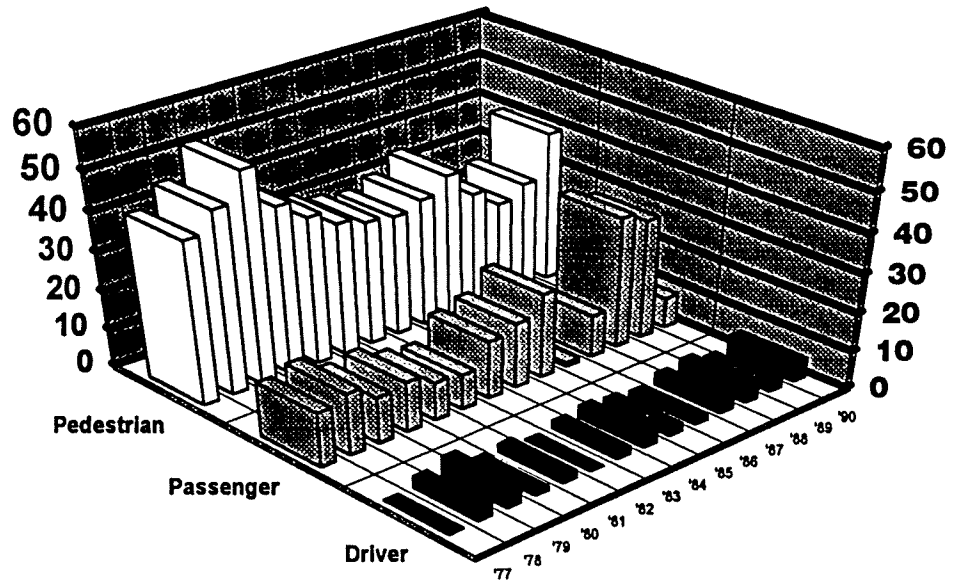
data provide the following insight into school bus occupant crash injuries:

- The National Safety Council estimated that school bus occupants (pupil) sustained 9,800 injuries during the 1989-1990 school year.
- Data indicate that approximately half of the injuries occurring in school bus crashes are to the head, face, and neck.

While there are few data on school bus crash injuries, *Accident Facts* and FARS provided current data regard-

Figure 3

Fatalities Involving School Buses
1977 through 1990



7-11

ing school bus crashes. The National Safety Council's *Accident Facts* details crash data for the 1989-1990 school year in Figure 2.

Figure 4

Pedestrian Fatalities in School Bus Related Crashes

1986:	Age 0-4	Age 5-9	Age 10-14	Age 15-19	Age 20+	Unknown	Total
Struck By Bus	3	21	2	0	5	0	31
Struck By Other Vehicle	0	6	3	2	5	0	16
TOTAL	3	27	5	2	10	0	47
1987:							
Struck By Bus	2	20	2	1	7	0	32
Struck By Other Vehicle	0	6	3	0	2	0	11
TOTAL	2	26	5	1	9	0	43
1988:							
Struck By Bus	6	9	0	0	4	0	19
Struck By Other Vehicle	0	9	5	0	3	0	17
TOTAL	6	18	5	0	7	0	36
1989:							
Struck By Bus	4	11	0	0	10	0	25
Struck By Other Vehicle	0	4	2	0	1	0	7
TOTAL	4	15	2	0	11	0	32
1990:							
Struck By Bus	2	16	3	1	10	0	32
Struck By Other Vehicle	1	3	1	1	1	0	7
TOTAL	3	19	4	2	11	0	39

The agency's Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) provides complete information on all fatal crashes, including school-bus type vehicles. FARS data were analyzed to determine the location of the fatally injured persons in school bus-related crashes. Since the data include all school bus body types, some of the crashes and resulting fatalities may not involve pupils. Many used school buses are sold to church and civic organizations, but these vehicles are still classified as "school buses" in FARS. Additionally, many school bus-type vehicles are manufactured for sale to non-school organizations (company buses, airport buses, etc.), but they would still be classified as a "school bus" in FARS because of the body style.

Figure 3 provides information on persons killed in school bus-related crashes from 1977 to 1990. It is clear that the occupants of the school bus are exposed to the least risk, when compared to pedestrians (most of whom are getting on or off of the school bus) and the occupants of the other vehicle (s) that were involved in the crash.

V. Pedestrians and School Bus Safety

Vehicular crashes are not the only crashes involving school buses. Injuries and fatalities occurring to pedestrians while travelling to and from school and school bus loading zones are addressed as part of school bus safety. The National Safety Council reports that during the 1989-1990 school year most pedestrians were killed while either approaching or leaving a loading zone and that more than half of the pupil pedestrian victims were struck by the school bus they were entering or leaving. The National Academy of Science Special Report No. 222, "School Bus Safety," states that injuries re-

ceived at bus stops tend to be more severe than injuries received on board a bus. The report also states that, as pedestrians, children between the ages of five and six are particularly vulnerable, accounting for more than one-half of the children fatally injured by school buses. Pedestrians killed in school bus-related crashes accounted for 28 percent of total fatalities from 1986 through 1990. Of the 197 fatally injured pedestrians, 139 were struck by the bus, and the remaining 58 were struck by another vehicle. Figure 4 presents school bus-related pedestrian fatalities by age groups for years 1986 through 1990.

Approximately 75 percent of pedestrian fatalities involving school buses over this five year period were of school age (less than 20 years of age); of these, approximately 69 percent were struck by the bus.

Figure 5 illustrates the number of school age pedestrians fatally injured on a weekday between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. from September through May 1991; and Figure 6 illustrates the number of school age pedestrans fatally injured on a weekday between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. from September through May 1991. Efforts have been directed at lowering the number of school age pedestrian fatalities during these time periods. Behavioral and vehicular modifications have been implemented to create a safer environment for pupils walking or riding a bus or bicycle to school.

Countermeasures addressing pedestrian issues involving pupils in school bus loading zones and pupils on the way to and from schools have been developed and implemented. Campaigns to increase motorists' awareness of pupils are also effective measures to increase the safety of pupils. One

Figure 5

Pedestrians Fatally Injured on Weekdays between 6a.m. and 9a.m., September through May 1991

	Age 0-4	Age 5-9	Age 10-14	Age 15-19	Age 20+	Unknown	Total
Pedestrians	6	22	16	16	260	4	324
Bicyclist	1	3	9	2	40	1	56
Other Cyclist	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown Occupants	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
TOTALS	7	25	26	19	300	5	382

Source: FARS 1991

Figure 6

Pedestrians Fatally Injured on Weekdays between 2p.m. and 5p.m., September through May 1991

	Age 0-4	Age 5-9	Age 10-14	Age 15-19	Age 20+	Unknown	Total
Pedestrians	57	81	51	23	391	3	606
Bicyclist	1	19	43	11	48	0	122
Other Cyclist	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown Occupants	1	2	2	0	5	0	10
TOTALS	59	102	97	34	444	3	739

Source: FARS 1991

7-13

program designed to teach young children how to become safer pedestrians is the Willy Whistle series. Another educational program that is being developed is the Pedestrian Safety Training Program for Young School Bus Riders. This comprehensive curriculum is designed for students in kindergarten through the twelfth grade, and is targeted at rural and suburban children.

V. Seat Belts and School Buses

The issue of seat belts and schools buses continues to raise many questions. While there are no concrete answers, there are some guidelines to evaluate when considering putting seat belts on school buses.

Mentioned earlier was the fact that a set of safety standards for school buses became effective on April 1, 1977, and among these was FMVSS 222 "School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection." This standard established minimum crash protection levels for occupants of all school buses. For large school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating above 10,000 pounds, the standard requires occupant protection through the concept of compartmentalization. The National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences has confirmed the effectiveness of compartmentalization by independent studies. Under current requirements of FMVSS 222, small school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating of under 10,000 pounds, must be equipped with lap belts at all designated passenger seating positions. For small school buses manufactured on or after September 1, 1991, manufacturers have the option of installing lap/shoulder belts at all designated passenger seating positions. The agency believes that these belts are necessary and effective in providing occupant protection in those vehicles because of their smaller size and weight, which is closer to that of passenger cars and light trucks.

As cited earlier, in the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Act of 1987, Congress directed the Department of Transportation to contract with the National Academy of Science (NAS) to "conduct a comprehensive study and investigation of the principal causes of fatalities and injuries to school children riding in school buses and of the use of seat belts in school buses and other measures that may improve the safety of school bus transportation." The purpose of the NAS study was to "determine those safety measures that are most effective in protecting the safety of school children while boarding, leaving, and riding in school buses." Special Report No. 222 issued in May 1989 was the result of this Congressional directive and confirmed the high level of safety provided by the Nation's school bus fleet.

In its conclusions, the NAS committee noted that "the overall potential benefits of requiring seat belts on large school buses are insufficient to justify a Federal requirement for mandatory installation. The funds used to purchase and maintain seat belts might better be spent on other school bus safety programs and devices that could save more lives and reduce more injuries." The committee pointed out that since "children are at greater risk of being killed in school bus loading zones (i.e., boarding and leaving the bus) than on board school buses, "a larger share of the school bus safety effort should be directed to improving the safety of school bus loading zones.

While there are no Federal requirements for safety belts on large school buses, states are free to install them if they feel it is in the best interest of safety in their state. However, as noted in the NAS report, if the safety belts are to be beneficial, "states and local school districts that require seat belts on school buses must ensure not only that all school bus passengers wear the belts, but that they wear them correctly."

VI. Vans Used As School Buses

The use of vans in lieu of school buses has become a significant issue in recent years. Many jurisdictions, in an effort to save money, have purchased passenger vans or multi-purpose vehicles to transport students.

Under Federal law, any passenger motor vehicle, including a van, designed for carrying 10 or more persons is classified as a bus. A bus is classified as a school bus if it is used or intended for use in transporting students to and from school or school-related activities.

The agency believes that school buses should be as safe as possible. Accordingly, minimum safety standards that all new school buses must meet have been established. Federal law prohibits dealers from selling or leasing vehicles with a capacity of more than 10 persons, intended for transporting students to and from school or school-related activities, unless the vehicles comply with the applicable Federal school bus safety standards. Subject to state law, a school could use vans with a capacity of 10 or less to transport school children; however, the agency advises against this action.

Another issue is that some jurisdictions have acquired multi-purpose vehicles with 12 to 15 passenger capacity and used them as school buses. While they may not have been sold to them legally, their continued use is dictated by state law.

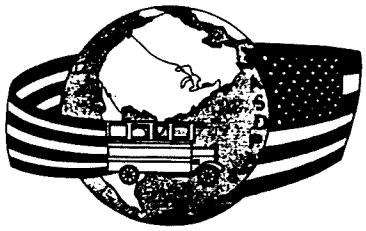
NHTSA believes that safety standards requiring a higher level of safety performance for school buses are appropriate. Thus, while these van type school buses are somewhat more expensive than a conventional full-size van, the increased levels of safety justify the higher cost. We believe that school children should be transported in vehicles that provide them with the highest levels of safety.

VII. Current and Future Agency Activities

The agency is in the process of considering amendments to or has published the following vehicle safety standards to improve the level of school bus safety.

FMVSS No. 111, Rearview Mirrors, intended to reduce the number of deaths and injuries that occur when the driver of a motor vehicle does not have a clear and reasonably unobstructed view to the rear. The standard is being amended to establish performance-oriented requirements to ensure a complete view of critical areas in front of, along side of, and to the rear of school buses.

FMVSS No. 131, School Bus Pedestrian Safety Devices, intended to reduce the risk to pedestrians near stopped school buses. The standard requires new school buses to be equipped with a stop signal arm to be located on the left side of the bus. This reflective stop arm is to be automatically deployed, at a minimum, during the entire time that the red signal lights are activated. The stop arm may have two flashing red lights in-



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DIRECTORS OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Position Paper

Safety Belts on Large School Buses

While everyone agrees that the safety of our Nation's children on school buses is important, often there are disagreements over the benefits of certain safety features. The issue of whether to require safety belts on large school buses is a topic that has been thoroughly studied and debated for many years.

School bus transportation has been and continues to be one of the safest forms of transportation in America. Every year, approximately 390,000 public school buses travel about 4.2 billion miles to transport 23 million children to and from school and school-related activities. During the past 20 years, an average on 16 school bus passengers per year have sustained fatal injuries in crashes. While each of these fatalities is tragic, the number of school bus passenger fatalities is small when compared to the number of children killed in other types of motor vehicles. For example, in 1994 there were over 5,000 deaths among children aged five to 18 in vehicles other than school buses. Considering the number of miles that school buses travel compared to passenger cars, school buses are about four times safer.

One of the major reasons for the outstanding safety record of school buses is the manner in which they are constructed. As is the case with all motor vehicles sold in the United States, school buses have to meet a stringent series of Federal motor vehicle safety standards designed to provide school bus occupants with high levels of safety should a crash occur. One of those Federal standards, "School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection," establishes minimum crash protection requirements for occupants of all school buses manufactured on or after April 1, 1977.

Large School Buses:

For large school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating above 10,000 pounds, the Federal standard requires occupant protection through a concept called "compartmentalization" -- strong, well-padded, well-anchored, high-backed, evenly-spaced seats. The effectiveness of "compartmentalization" has been confirmed by independent studies by the National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences. In 1987, the National Transportation Safety Board completed a detailed analysis of 44 serious accidents involving large school buses. The Board reached several conclusions concerning safety belts, most notable that most school bus occupant fatalities and serious injuries were "attributable to the occupants' seating position being in direct line with the crash forces. It is unlikely that the availability of any type of restraint would have improved their injury outcome."

In 1989, the National Academy of Sciences completed a study at the direction of the United States Congress on "the principal causes of fatalities and injuries to school children riding

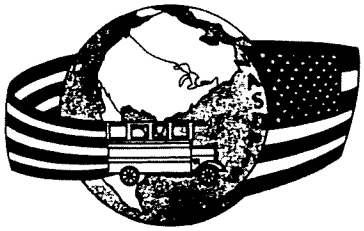
in school buses and of the use of seat belts in school buses and other measures that may improve the safety of school bus transportation." The Academy was directed to "determine those safety measures that are most effective in protecting the safety of school children while boarding, leaving, and riding in school buses." In its conclusions, the Academy noted that "the overall potential benefits of requiring safety belts on large school buses are insufficient to justify a Federal requirement for mandatory installation. Funds used to purchase and maintain seat belts might be better spent on other school bus safety programs and devices that could save more lives and reduce more injuries." The Academy pointed out that since children are at greater risk of being killed in the school bus loading zone (i.e., while boarding or leaving the bus) than as a passenger on the school bus, "a large share of the school bus safety effort should be directed to improving the safety of school bus loading zones."

Small School Buses:

For small school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating under 10,001 pounds, the Federal standard requires either lap belts or lap/shoulder belts at all designated seating positions. Safety belts are needed, and have been effective, in these vehicles because the size and weight of these smaller school buses is closer to that of passenger cars and light trucks. The National Transportation Safety Board also analyzed 24 crashes involving these small school buses and determined that the available safety belts were worn by approximately two-thirds of the passengers in the small school buses. The Board concluded that the small school buses, which also utilize most of the "compartmentalization" features required in large school buses, "provided good crash protection to both restrained and unrestrained passengers."

While there are no Federal requirements for safety belts on large school buses, some state and local governments have established such requirements. In its study, the National Academy of Sciences noted that in order for safety belts to be beneficial, "states and local school districts that require seat belts on school buses must ensure not only that all bus passengers wear the belts, but that they wear them correctly." In late 1995, in response to a recent requirement that all new large school buses in New Jersey be equipped with seat belts, the National Transportation Safety Board initiated another special study of crashes of large school buses equipped with safety belts to determine their safety consequences. Because serious school bus crashes are relatively rare, it will most likely take several years for the Board to collect sufficient information for its analysis.

In the meantime, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services continues to support the conclusions reached by the National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences that there is no supportable need for safety belts on large school buses. With the limited resources available to our education system, we must allocate those resources where they will provide the maximum benefit to our children. To do otherwise would be irresponsible. (Pp revised January 1996)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE DIRECTORS OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Position Paper

History of School Bus Safety --
Why Are School Buses Built as They Are?

In the earliest days of our Nation, education was mostly provided through churches. Public education started in the mid 1600's, but pupil transportation was not provided until the late 1800's. By 1910, thirty states had pupil transportation programs in place. The first "vehicles" used to transport students was nothing more than horse-drawn carts which were borrowed from local farmers. With the development of automobiles and trucks with gasoline-powered engines, the school "wagon" was replaced with the school "truck." During the 1920's and 1930's, the Nation's roadway system was expanding, especially in rural communities. This led to a greater need for vehicles to transport school children and the formation of an industry of manufacturers of school buses.

As the number of school buses operating on the roadways increased, there came the inevitable problems. Several serious tragedies occurred involving school buses which caused school officials to think seriously about developing safety guidelines or standards. In 1939, representatives from 48 states gathered to develop standards and recommendations for school buses. Since that time, there has been a total of 12 National Conferences on School Transportation where representatives from each state gather to revise existing and establish new safety standards for school buses and operating procedures for the safe transportation of school children, including those with disabilities.

In addition to the requirements developed by the school transportation community itself, there are Federal standards that apply to school buses. As a result of the passage of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and the School Bus Safety Amendments of 1974, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation, has issued 34 Federal motor vehicle safety standards which apply to school buses. These standards cover a wide range of components and systems, e.g., brakes, steering, glazing, lights, fuel system integrity, mirrors, heaters/defrosters, compressed natural gas containers, etc., and apply to all types of motor vehicles. Many of these Federal standards have unique requirements for school buses, e.g., outside mirrors to provide the seated driver with a view in front of and along both sides of the bus; amber and red warning lights when the bus is stopped to load or unload passengers; emergency exits; and fuel system integrity. In addition, four of the standards are unique to school buses. These are:

1. "School Bus Rollover Protection," which specifies the minimum structural strength of buses in rollover-type accidents;

2. "School Bus Body Joint Strength," which specifies the minimum strength of the joints between panels that comprise the bus body and the body structure;

3. "School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection," which establishes requirements for school bus seating systems for all sizes of school buses, and provides minimum performance requirements for wheelchair securement/occupant restraint devices and establishes a requirement that wheelchair locations be forward facing; and

4. "School Bus Pedestrian Safety Devices," which requires school buses to be equipped with an automatic stop signal arm on the left side of the bus to help alert motorists that they should stop their vehicles because children are boarding or leaving a stopped school bus.

The design and construction of today's school buses are a direct result of both the Federal motor vehicle safety standards that apply to school buses, and the standards adopted by the National Conferences on School Transportation, and some requirements that are unique to particular state or local school districts. While some may argue that today's school buses do not look much different from their predecessors of 30-40 years ago, they are dramatically different. The improvements made to school buses in the past decades, and improvements in driver training, school bus maintenance, and school bus operating procedures, have been responsible for the outstanding safety record of school transportation. Well-trained school bus drivers actually avoid many crashes.

Every year, approximately 390,000 public school buses travel about 4.2 billion miles to transport 23 million children to and from school and school-related activities. While catastrophic school bus crashes have occurred, they are rare events. Most school bus crashes are minor, and in most crashes involving passenger cars and light trucks, the school bus has the advantage of its larger size and weight. As a result, many more people are killed or injured each year in vehicles that crash into school buses than are killed or injured in the school buses. Developing ways to protect school bus occupants in catastrophic crashes is difficult, if not impossible, such as those involving trains and heavy trucks. The crash forces in those accidents are so great that any reasonable structural design cannot maintain the integrity of the vehicle, which is one critical component of occupant crash protection.

The safety of pupil transportation is the highest priority of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services. The Association continues its active involvement with Federal, state, and local governments to establish standards and programs that will continue to safeguard the future generations of America.

Revised January 1996

Kansas Senate Transportation Committee

Senate Bill #180

February 18, 1997

Presented by
Evelyn Davis
Member
Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association

901 NW Lyman Rd.
Topeka, Kansas 66608

Wk 913-575-8600
Hm 913-836-2351

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 8

My reasons for addressing you today is due to concern about student safety as it relates to the use of seat belts on school buses (SB 180). School buses are the safest form of land transportation according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). That is not to say it is perfect; it means the odds of a child being injured or killed while riding on a school bus are less than they would be if the child rode a bike, rode in a private passenger vehicle, or even if (s)he took a public bus or taxi.

School buses use the concept of compartmentalization. School buses have no protrusions in the passenger area (no door handles, instrument switches, etc.) and the highbacked seats which are well padded plus close seat spacing creates an "egg carton" environment which has proved very effective since it was implemented in 1977. In catastrophic incidents (train/bus collision, for example) neither belts nor compartmentalization will be effective.

The design of a school bus is radically different from the design of other passenger vehicles. There is concern that lap belts in conjunction with the present school bus design would wind up causing deaths and injuries that would not occur without belts. Consider the number of passengers and the time that would be involved in a crisis situation where children, especially younger ones, would not be able to get their belts undone; the time to leave a burning bus would be greatly increased.

The education programs promoting seat belt use have been semi effective, but certainly the rate of usage in private vehicles is not nearly 100%. While most of those passionately pressing for seat belts on buses probably do use seat belts in their own private vehicles, they fail to realize that their child is still four (4) times more likely to be killed or injured belted in their private vehicle in an accident than the child would be riding a school bus without benefits of belts in an accident.

The majority of school transportation personnel have been against seat belts on buses consistently and we sometimes are viewed as uncaring, insensitive, and more concerned with the bottom line, i.e., it's seen as a dollars and cents issue that causes us to oppose seat belts on buses. However, I believe our record of testimony at legislative hearings over the years will indicate that we have spoken out for issues that would cost districts money rather than save it. KSPTA spoke here in favor of a 12-year cap on school buses which is definitely more costly than letting districts continue to use old buses that do not have the benefit of safety equipment installed on later models. This includes such equipment as roof escape hatches, push out windows for rapid and easy escape, flame retardant seat cushion material that increases the amount of time available for exit in case of a fire.

Kansas State Pupil Transportation Association (KSPTA) has worked hard at the state level to encourage the state department of education and now the state board of education to adopt new rules and regulations that will enhance the level of safety for school bus passengers. Many of these rules and regulations do cost extra dollars, but we feel that those benefits outweigh the costs.

However, limited money is a factor that you, as legislators, wrestle with long and hard throughout the legislative sessions. And this isn't like the state budget. Whatever you do with this issue will be a pass-along mandate which you will not take into account as you decide school financing. And while it, by itself, won't break the bank for many districts, I'm sure you don't want to be in the position of adding any additional financial burden to local taxpayers unless you are convinced the money is well spent. To do otherwise is irresponsible.

And, of course, putting belts on the bus is only the beginning. The belts will be a total waste of money if they are not being used and used correctly. No matter how well intentioned a school bus driver is, (and I assure you my experience with them both from my own staff and from having met drivers from all over the state, they are a conscientious group), she or he cannot know at every minute whether or not students are belted in. Drivers already have an onerous task and it is

apparent from the statistics that they are doing an outstanding job now, but spending the money to put belts on buses does not ensure in anyway that they will be used.

Another cost will be the maintenance and upkeep on the belts as they are definitely subject to vandalism both to the belt fabric and the fastening mechanism.

There is no safety group which concludes the use of seat belts increases passenger safety on school buses. These safety groups include National Highway Traffic Safety Administration , National Transportation Safety Board, Transportation Research Board, the National Safety Councils, The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, and the National Association of Pupil Transportation. All promote and support compartmentalization; none recommends the installation and use of seat belts.

Any money that might be used on seat belts (where the problem isn't) could advantageously be used on loading/unloading zone safety enhancement (where the problem is) .

I urge you to consider the facts and vote "no" on Senate Bill 180.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views with you today.

Evelyn Davis
February 18, 1997

SB 180: REQUIRING SEAT BELTS ON SCHOOL BUSES

Testimony presented before the Senate Transportation and Tourism Committee
by
Brilla Highfill Scott, Associate Executive Director
United School Administrators of Kansas

February 18, 1997

Mister Chairman and Members of the Transportation and Tourism Committee:

United School Administrators of Kansas opposes Senate Bill 180 that requires the installation of passenger lap seat belts.

As school administrators we desire the operation of school buses to be as safe and cost effective as possible. We are unable to find significant research that supports the need for seat belts on new buses.

Attached to my testimony are the results of studies conducted by the National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences. Both reports indicate that compartmentalization (strong, well-padded, well-anchored, high-backed, evenly spaced seats) provides good crash protection.

United School Administrators of Kansas would ask that you report SB 180 unfavorably.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 9

9-1

820 SE Quincy St, Ste 200 Topeka, KS 66612-1165 (913) 232-6566 FAX (913) 232-9776

Safety Belts on Large School Buses http://www.schoolbusfleet.com/bb/belts.htm

While everyone agrees that the safety of our nation's children on school buses is important, often there are disagreements over the benefits of certain safety features. The issue of whether to require safety belts on large school buses is a topic that has been thoroughly studied and debated for many years.

School bus transportation has been and continues to be one of the safest forms of transportation in America. Every year, approximately 390,000 public school buses travel about 4.2 billion miles to transport 23 million children to and from school and school-related activities. During the past 20 years, an average of 16 school bus passengers per year have sustained fatal injuries in crashes. While each of these fatalities is tragic, the number of school bus passenger fatalities is small when compared to the number of children killed in other types of motor vehicles. For example, in 1994 there were over 5,000 deaths among children aged 5 to 18 in vehicles other than school buses. Considering the number of miles that school buses travel compared to passenger cars, school buses are about four times safer.

One of the major reasons for the outstanding safety record of school buses is the manner in which they are constructed. As is the case with all motor vehicles sold in the United States, school buses have to meet a stringent series of federal motor vehicle

safety standards designed to provide school bus occupants with high levels of safety should a crash occur. One of those federal standards, "School Bus Passenger Seating and Crash Protection," establishes minimum crash protection requirements for occupants of all school buses manufactured on or after April 1, 1977.

Large school buses:

For large school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating above 10,000 pounds, the federal standard requires occupant protection through a concept called "compartmentalization" ? strong, well-padded, well-anchored, high-backed, evenly spaced seats.

The effectiveness of compartmentalization has been confirmed by independent studies by the National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences. In 1987, the National Transportation Safety Board completed a detailed analysis of 44 serious accidents involving large school buses. The board reached several conclusions concerning safety belts, most notably that most school bus occupant fatalities and serious injuries were "attributable to the occupants' seating position being in direct line with the crash forces. It is unlikely that the availability of any type of restraint would have improved their injury outcome."

In 1989, the National Academy of Sciences completed a study at the direction of Congress on "the principal causes of fatalities and injuries to schoolchildren riding in school buses and of the use of seat belts in school buses and other measures that may improve the safety of school bus transportation." The academy was directed to "determine those safety measures that are most effective in protecting the safety of schoolchildren while boarding, leaving and riding in school buses." In its conclusions, the academy noted that "the overall potential benefits of requiring safety belts on large school buses are insufficient to justify a federal requirement for mandatory installation. Funds used to purchase and maintain seat belts might be better spent on other school bus safety programs and devices that could save more lives and reduce more injuries." The academy pointed out that since children are at greater risk of being killed in the school bus loading zone (i.e., while boarding or leaving the bus) than as a

passenger on the school bus, "a large share of the school bus safety effort should be directed at improving the safety of school bus loading zones."

Small school buses:

For small school buses, those with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds and under, the federal standard requires either lap belts or lap/shoulder belts at all designated seating positions. Safety belts are needed, and have been effective, in these vehicles because the size and weight of these smaller school buses is closer to that of passenger cars and light trucks. The National Transportation Safety Board also analyzed 24 crashes involving these small school buses and determined that the available safety belts were worn by approximately two-thirds of the passengers in the small school buses. The board concluded that the small school buses, which also utilize most of the "compartmentalization" features required in large school buses, "provided good crash protection to both restrained and unrestrained passengers."

While there are no federal requirements for safety belts on large school buses, some state and local governments have established such requirements. In its study, the National Academy of Sciences noted that in order for safety belts to be beneficial, "states and local school districts that require seat belts on school buses must ensure not only that all bus passengers wear the belts, but that they wear them correctly." In late 1995, in response to a recent requirement that all new large school buses in New Jersey be equipped with seat belts, the National Transportation Safety Board initiated another special study of crashes of large school buses equipped with safety belts to determine their safety consequences. Because serious school bus crashes are relatively rare, it will most likely take several years for the board to collect sufficient information for its analysis.

In the meantime, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services continues to support the conclusions reached by the National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences that there is no supportable need for safety belts on large school buses. With the limited resources available to our education system, we must allocate those resources where they will provide the maximum benefit to our children. To do otherwise would be irresponsible.

I am Ted Sinclair from Derby, Kansas.
I am a retired transportation supervisor of 21 years with the Derby School District #260.
In the middle 70's, we were one of the first districts in the state to put seat belts in two 66 passenger buses.
This was ordered by the school board, as the state at this time was wanting to try them.
We did try them and at the time it was a very high cost for the belts and the cost of installing them.
This was the start of problems because the driver could not check each student to see if they had fastened them. If she did see them, as soon as the bus started, off they came.
Then they were used as weapons, also they were cut off and taken from the bus.
We also had eye glasses broken and cuts on heads and arms.
Even some windows were broken and we had one law suit.
After 3 months we did take them all out.
There is no way a bus driver can keep up with 66 seat belts and still be a safe driver.
So in saying this, there would need to be an aid on all buses to be sure they were used which is an extra cost for the district.
Also, if an accident occurs and the bus upsets, you are going to have a bunch of hanging students and who is going to be there to cut them down before being cut to pieces?
They are O.K. for the special education buses as today most all of them have an aid and only 3 to 5 students on the bus at a time.
Our buses are safer today than ever and stronger in all ways.
So, I hope you think real hard before voting on this and do say NO!

Thank you.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 10

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1420 S.W. Arrowhead Rd, Topeka, Kansas 66604
913-273-3600

Testimony on S.B. 180 before the Senate Transportation and Tourism Committee
by Karen Lowery, Coordinator of Governmental Relations
February 19, 1997

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today on S.B. 180. The Kansas Association of School Boards has a standing legislative policy which states "KASB opposes additional transportation safety requirements unless they are proven effective in increasing safety." Following this policy we have concerns regarding the requirements of S.B. 180.

There have long been debates over the effectiveness of seat belts on school buses. Are there any conclusive studies that prove using seat belts will reduce the number of injuries? If the state is going to seriously consider mandating seat belts, we would encourage extensive investigation into the matter, with emphasis on the current safety enhancements in place.

Other concerns regarding S.B. 180 we would like to bring to the committee's attention include:

- Who is responsible for making sure students' belts are properly adjusted and fastened?
- Will students use unfastened belts as "toys" causing injury to themselves and other students?
- What additional financial burdens will this place on school districts?

KASB advocates for child safety and would never want to see students injured, but we believe this is not the most prudent approach.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 11

11-1

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1420 S.W. Arrowhead Rd, Topeka, Kansas 66604
913-273-3600

Testimony on S.B. 131 before the Senate Transportation and Tourism Committee
by Karen Lowery, Coordinator of Governmental Relations
February 18, 1997

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in favor of S.B. 131. As you are aware, KASB is a strong supporter of greater local control for school districts. By inserting the word "individuals" we believe this bill would allow local districts more flexibility in determining the use of their school buses.

This change reinforces the concept of local control and allows local boards of education to make decisions for their own districts. We would encourage your favorable action.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 12

12-1

STATE OF KANSAS

DIVISION OF THE BUDGET
Room 152-E
State Capitol Building
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504
(913) 296-2436
FAX (913) 296-0231

Bill Graves
Governor

Gloria M. Timmer
Director

February 12, 1997

The Honorable Ben Vidricksen, Chairperson
Senate Committee on Transportation and Tourism
Statehouse, Room 143-N
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Senator Vidricksen:

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note for SB 180 by Senate Committee on Transportation and Tourism

In accordance with KSA 75-3715a, the following fiscal note concerning SB 180 is respectfully submitted to your committee.

SB 180 requires that *every* school bus purchased on or after January 1, 1998, be equipped with seat belts. Under current law, small buses, weighting less than 10,000 pounds, are required to have seat belts, but the larger yellow school buses are not required to have seat belts. In addition, the State Board of Education would be required to develop and implement a school bus safety program covering such subjects as loading zone behavior, behavior when boarding, being discharged from and being transported in school buses, and the proper use of seat belts. The owner or operator of the school bus would not be liable for a passenger who sustains injury as a direct result of the passenger's failure to use the seat belt properly.

The Department of Education indicates passage of this bill would not have a direct fiscal impact on the state. However, it appears that the average cost of adding seat belts to a school bus is estimated to be $1,200 per bus. The average length of school bus service in Kansas schools is eight years. Therefore, one-eighth of the school buses are purchased each year. Kansas schools currently own or contract for the operation of approximately 5,940 buses (which would be covered under this bill) and would be purchasing one-eighth or 743 buses a year. The increased cost to the school boards and contractors is estimated to be $891,600 (743 buses times $1,200).

Sincerel

SENATE TRANSPORTATION & TOURISM
2/18/97
ATTACHMENT 13

Gloria M. Timmer

Gloria M. Timmer
Director of the Budget

cc: Dale Dennis, Education