

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION &amp; TOURISM COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Ben Vidricksen at 9:05 a.m. on February 22, 1999 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

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

Conferees appearing before the committee: Senator Sherman Jones  
Charles Taylor  
Sheila Walker, KS Dept. of Revenue

Others attending: See attached list

**HCR 5004: Establishing a Task Force to Study Rail Passenger Service in Kansas**

This Committee held hearings on **HCR 5004** on February 9, 1999. Senator Jordan moved to recommend this resolution favorable for passage. Senator Gilstrap seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**SB 305: An act re drivers licenses - driver education**

Senator Jones provided information regarding this issues and how he had first passed along information to Dale Dennis as the Board of Education has the authority to determine what courses can be provided to school districts, this was approximately three years ago. The developer of this project, Charles Taylor grew up next door to Senator Jones. Since the original contact approximately three years ago, he has gone on working to get this program in place in other states and now wishes to present it to this legislature and that is why Senator Jones introduced to this committee (no written testimony).

Mr. Charles Taylor provided members background information and a brief outline of the program he offers to train parents to teach their children an approved course of driver's education. He explained he developed this as a result of his over 22 years of work as a driving instructor, accident investigator with the U.S. Air Force and state driving examiner (Attachment 1) Basically, he is strongly advocating parent taught driver's education with much more time spent driving under supervision. He cited other states with this type training, California, Nebraska, Minnesota, New Mexico, plus several others as a result of last years parental - adding that almost every state mandates some form of parental involvement.

Parents would purchase this training from Mr. Taylor's company and then be certified to train their child and his company would supervise and certify as to satisfactory completion of the training. Instead of sending a child to driver's education through a school or private contractor, this would provide another option. Staff explained this would help only those who wished their child to receive a restricted license at age 15. Contact Hank Avila, Legislative Research Staff person for additional detailed material on the course work, methodology, etc.

Sheila Walker, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Revenue, introduced Alan Anderson, Chief Examiner for driver's license who would be able to answer committee member's questions. Ms Walker discussed possible implications regarding the fiscal impact of **SB 305**. There could be problems if they were inundated with requests, but it presently would not seem to have an impact (Attachment 2).

Some members were ready to act on the bill. However, others felt more information was needed, particularly as to where this would "fit" in the current educational picture, and several other questions that needed consideration. Chairman Vidricksen requested staff obtain additional information. Hopefully, it will be available tomorrow and the committee will again look at this bill.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 1999.



# IS STATE CERTIFIED DRIVER EDUCATION THE BEST WAY TO PRODUCE SAFE DRIVERS?

## *A CASE FOR PARENT-TAUGHT DRIVER TRAINING*

By Charles Taylor

In the 1940's and 50's parents were the primary teachers of their youngsters in driver training. As the years passed, many states began to mandate driver training programs taught within local high schools. Thirty classroom hours and six hours of actual behind-the-wheel instruction became the nation's standard, however, these programs were originally intended to be only a supplement to parent-taught driver training. Over the years, however, the American public and our elected officials, began to see this as the total means for training a young driver. Many state officials began to believe that parents were, in fact, incapable of taking on this process and producing a safe driver. From the 1960's to the early 90's, state mandated courses proliferated. At one time, nearly every state in the union held some form of regulated driver training.

Is state mandated driver training rooted in logic and does this "certified" method actually lower crash potentials? What effect do parents have on the crash potential of young drivers? Are parents receiving fair market value for the millions of dollars they shell out annually, either through tax dollars to school systems or directly to commercial schools, for driver training?

### ***"CERTIFIED" DRIVER TRAINING, WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?***

As a "certified" driving instructor, it always concerned me that the courses we taught seemed to be too short and too cursory to create a long term impact on the young drivers we were teaching. I eventually requested research data from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) on the effectiveness of state mandated driver training. This is what their research revealed:

In 1978, Doctor's Leon Robertson and Paul Zador, conducted a study of the crash involvement of teenagers after having taken driver education--*American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)*, Oct. 1978, Vol. 68, No 10. They concluded, ***"Among 16-17 year olds, driver education was associated with a great increase in the number of licensed drivers, without a decrease in the fatal crash involvement per 10,000 licensed drivers."***

Dr. Robertson conducted a follow-up study which was published in the *AJPH* in June 1980 which stated, ***"The conclusion of previously reported research that high school driver education is a major contributor to earlier licenser and accompanying crash involvement of the 16-17 year old population is supported by this additional evidence. This finding is consistent with other research showing that when high school driver education is dropped from schools, licensing and crash rates among teenagers decrease."***

Another study, Accident, Analysis, and Prevention Journal, Vol. 18, published in 1986, entitled, High School Driver Education: Further Evaluation of the Dekalb County Study, *“...there is an implicit assumption in many state laws that formal driver education provides a protective influence that justifies public financial support. However, the role of high school driver education in mitigating or exacerbating the high death and injury rate among teenage drivers has been the subject of considerable controversy. Completion of a driver education course is typically associated with better crash and violation records per licensed driver [Allgaier, 1964], and this actuarial advantage has been the basis for some automobile insurance companies offering lower premiums for teenage drivers who have taken the courses.”*

However the abstract of the study gives us the results: *“The Dekalb County, Georgia, study is the largest experimental evaluation of high school driver education to date. Detailed reanalyzes of data from that study reveal that students assigned to an enhanced driver education program (Safe Performance Curriculum) were more likely to obtain drivers licenses, to be in car crashes and to have traffic violations than control students not assigned to driver education.”*

A 1992, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) conducted an annual survey of fatal crashes per age group within each state. The crash data revealed no correlation between lower crash rate and mandated driver education. In fact, state officials are hard pressed to find any example where formal driver education is an overwhelming success and warrants the kind of legislative/public financial support it currently receives.

### ***WHY DOES “CERTIFIED” TRAINING NOT LOWER CRASH RATES?***

There are four elements which must be included in the framework of every driver training course. Without which, it is impossible to produce a safe-responsible driver.

The four crucial elements to producing a safe driver are:

a. **Maturity.** There must exist, within the construct of the program, a method for assessing the young driver’s maturity development. Since teenagers are often too immature to handle the responsibility inherent with possessing a driver’s license, all driving courses must provide a method for evaluating this maturity level. It is important to note that each teenager matures over varied amounts of time (several months or years) and at different rate (some faster than others). No one but a caring parent can effectively assess the maturity level of a young driver.

b. **Proper Attitude.** Driver training must be able to instill, within this new driver, the proper attitude and disposition towards driving. Parents are best equipped to transmit ssion through guidance, oversight, and life changing attitudinal adjustments. By establishing rules, guidelines, and measuring points, parent oversight tends to have a long-term positive constraint on commonly displayed high-risk juvenile behavior.

Juvenile behavior experts continue to agree that parental involvement is the single greatest factor in reducing potential high risk activity and attitudes of our nations young people--including drivers. It is simply impossible for a "certified" instructor to adequately address this critical area of driving safety.

c. **Extensive Experience.** Task repetition is the only thing that transforms information into skill. Therefore, teenagers need extensive behind-the-wheel training, which requires the young driver to repeat tasks many times before being allowed to solo. Studies show that teenagers need between 150 to 300 hours or between 15 to 24 months of intensive training before licensing. Since the average state mandates between 6-8 hours of behind the wheel instruction, it is obvious why, under the current the current system, their crash rates remain high, and why it is the parent who must actually train the driver.

d. **Skill.** An effective evaluative process must exist within the construct of the program which measures the students safe-driving skills throughout the training. To be effective, the program must include requirements for passing a stringent evaluation standard before release.

Most state driving tests can be passed with little demonstrated skill and proficiency on the part of new drivers. Only an involved parent, with an effective evaluative process in-hand, can release safe-proficient drivers on the road.

Certification of instructors, schools, or courses primarily have reference to teacher training, classroom size, and vehicle equipment. States leaders believe (though the evidence is to the contrary) that by placing their concern on these peripheral areas, they can satisfy the training needs of a new driver. Instead, programs need to focus more on a quality end-product and less on peripheral issues.

The National Driver Training Institute, has the only program in the nation whose primary emphasis is on results. It has the only program that includes the four critical elements for producing a safe-responsible driver within the construct of the program. It is also the first driver training program available to the public which includes parental oversight and control from start to finish.

To learn more about the ongoing research into parent-taught driver training call Charles Taylor at 1-800-463-5850 or visit our web site at [www.nationaldrivertraining.com](http://www.nationaldrivertraining.com). You may email directly to [MWNDT@aol.com](mailto:MWNDT@aol.com).

HB 2233  
OR  
SB 305

## NINE REASONS TO SUPPORT PARENT-TAUGHT DRIVER EDUCATION

**PARENTAL RIGHTS** – The right of parents to direct the education of their children is a fundamental right and should, therefore, extend to parents who wish to teach their children to drive.

**GOOD PUBLIC POLICY** – The option for parents to instruct their children in drivers education allows them to be more involved with their adolescent children at a critical, developmental stage. It encourages parents to participate with the child in learning and to take more responsibility for the outcome. After all, who has more of an interest in the safety and well-being of the child, a parent or a certified driving teacher? Who is liable if that child is untrained or acts irresponsibly?

**SAFETY** – There is no statistical evidence to support the claim that certified state-mandated programs reduce crash rates. (Journal citations are available upon request.) Parents, with a good curriculum, can provide a graduated form of instruction allowing for more time behind-the-wheel. The Insurance Institute recommends just such a progressive approach. It is working in other states, such as, Colorado, Texas, Michigan, Nebraska, New Mexico, and California. Several other states have bills pending to require parental support.

**TUTORIAL** – The reason for the effectiveness of parent-taught driver education is the same as the reason for the effectiveness of home education in general. Both utilize the tutorial method with a low student-teacher ratio and individualized instruction aimed at mastery.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** – Rigorous testing of all drivers license applicants would ensure that the results of the driving instruction are adequate, regardless of the source of training. Many states are calling for a return to such a valid testing standard.

**LESS GOVERNMENT** – If certified instruction has no statistical effect on safety, what compelling interest does the government have in mandating it? Public and private driving schools enjoy the privileges of a government supported monopoly. This conflicts with the fundamental right of parents to direct the education of their children and free market ideals. At least half the states have no such mandated programs.

**FAIRNESS** – The rights of ALL parents must be afforded. Allowing or disallowing parents to teach their own children to drive, based on whether the children attend public or private educational institutes, is without rationale.

**MORE CHOICES** – Allowing parents to teach their own children to drive provides them an alternative to public and private driving schools. It is cost-effective, convenient, and allows for a more gradual approach to learning new skills.

**GOOD FAITH** – Law-respecting citizens become disillusioned with their government when they discover that a law is not enacted due to the influence of special groups on bureaucrats. Law makers must support safety of young drivers by not discouraging, but promoting, parent-taught driver training!

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mr. Duane Goossen, Director  
Division of Budget

**From:** Kansas Department of Revenue

**Date:** 02/15/99

**Subject:** Senate Bill 305  
Introduced as a Senate Bill

### **Brief of Bill**

Senate Bill 305, as introduced, is new legislation relating to driver licenses and concerning parent or guardian taught driver education courses.

This legislation authorizes parents or guardians to teach driver education courses to their own dependents as long as they meet the following requirements:

- a) they are a holder of a valid Kansas driver's license
- b) have not been convicted under DUI statutes
- c) are not disabled because of mental illness

The bill further establishes guidelines for the Division of Vehicles to approve the courses of instruction and for the Department of Revenue to promulgate rules and regulations relating to the administration of the program.

The provisions of Senate Bill 305 are exactly the same as those contained within House Bill 2233 introduced earlier this session.

The effective date of the bill would be July 1, 1999.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Passage of this bill would not affect State Highway Fund revenues.

### **Administrative Impact**

The additional administrative costs for forms and postage, related to implementation of the provisions of this bill could probably be absorbed by the Division. Other costs related to its administration are not readily identifiable since the Division has no way of knowing how many parents and guardians would take advantage of this option.

**Administrative Problems and Comments**

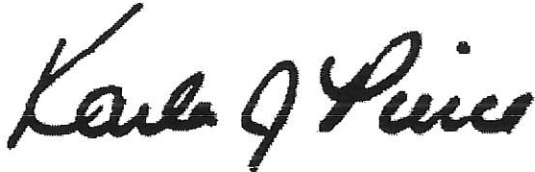
Senate Bill 305, as introduced, does not place a limitation upon which students would be affected. If there is no requirement that the students be "home scholars" then the option would be available for anyone to request approval to teach drivers education to their children. It is possible that the Division would be inundated with requests from parents who wish to save the several hundred dollars currently necessary for their children to receive drivers' education instruction through traditional facilities.

**Taxpayer/Customer Impact**

The provisions of this bill would be viewed as positive for those seeking a way to reduce the cost of drivers' education instruction for their children.

**Legal Impact**

Approved By:



Karla J. Pierce  
Secretary of Revenue