

March 7th, 2016

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

As a trauma center, Stormont Vail Health strives to provide the utmost care to injured patients. We treat victims of motor vehicle crashes every day, and those who were wearing seatbelts in the crash present with less severe injuries than those who were not belted. All too often, we do not get the chance to care for unbelted motor vehicle crash victims at all, because they die upon impact.

Our mission at Stormont Vail Health is “Working together to improve the health of our community.” In trauma care, we focus not only on providing optimal care of the injured patient, but are dedicated to preventing injuries as well. Education and enforcement initiatives have drastically increased the use of seatbelts throughout the years, proving that they are effective, but we have significant strides to make in this area.

It is for these reasons that **Stormont Vail Health supports SB 274** and a return of the seatbelt fine from \$10 to \$30. This increase in fine will not only encourage people to buckle up, but the additional \$20 will be used to fund the Seat Belts are For Everyone (SAFE) program so that it can be administered statewide. This student-run safety education program has received national recognition for its proven effectiveness in raising seatbelt usage.

Seatbelts save lives and reduce injuries. We respectfully request that committee members support SB 274. Thank you for your support.

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