

From: kseastrom@aol.com
To: [Betty Boaz](#)
Subject: Bill # 2008
Date: Monday, January 23, 2017 8:27:37 PM

RE: House Bill No. 2008; relating to seat belts; requiring installation on new buses.

The drivers of USD 330, Mission Valley submit the following observations for your consideration in the hopes that House Bill No. 2008 will not become law.

We feel that seat belts will not solve the problems or concerns for which they are installed because of several reasons.

1. Students will not fasten them correctly. This has been verified by drivers that now have seat belts on their buses.
2. This creates another responsibility or chore for the driver. It's also another distraction to take the driver's eyes off the road and avert their attention from the road. It's a matter of safety.
3. Seat belts on buses become weapons. Students have been reported to use their seat belt to hit each other or the bus windows.
4. It has also been reported that students like to click their seat belt to the one across the aisle making an obstacle course for students that are trying to get on or off the bus.

Again, a safety hazard and opportunity for a potential accident due to the driver's attention being taken off the road.

5. Often if the students do fasten their seat belt it is done loosely. Due to the tall seats that are a requirement on the buses now, younger children or small students can't see over the seats, so they fasten the seat belt loosely so that they can quickly still stand up and see out. We don't care for the tall backs on the bus seats since they block our view of the students. Often we are unable to tell if the student is sitting properly, what they are doing, or if they are even there....they like to crawl under the seats and "pop up" in a friend's seat a few rows away.
6. In case of a bus accident, what happens if the driver is unconscious? If the bus is tipped, who will undo all of those seat belts for the students to get off the bus.
7. Theoretically, in the right scenario, the seat belts would keep the students safe in an accident and they would be able to undo their seat belts and get off the bus quickly and safely. But, what if there is a fire? How is the driver supposed to decide which students to unbuckle? What if there is water involved as in a lake or river?

We feel that seat belts are not the answer to safety concerns regarding transporting students. Many drivers feel a better solution would be to have a para on each bus to help with safety concerns. A para could monitor behavior and do away with many of the distractions that drivers deal with. A para could also solve the other major problem on most buses in most districts and that is discipline – which is virtually non-existent or minimal at very best.

Thank you for considering our concerns. If more information is needed, feel free to contact our district office: 866-557-6686.

Respectfully submitted by the bus drivers of USD 330, Mission Valley