

MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Les Donovan at 8:30 a.m. on February 26, 2002 in Room 245-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

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

Conferees appearing before the committee: Carla Mahoney, Planned Parenthood
Trista Beadles, Staff Attorney, Governor's Ofc.
Cherie Sage, AAA
John Eichkorn, 2nd Lt., KHWP
Jim Keating, KS. Safe Kids Coalition
Rosalie Thornburgh, KDOT
Julie Sergeant, KDHE

Others attending: See attached list

SB 624: Re special license plates; Choose Life & Autism Society, Johnson Co.

Proponents on this bill testified before the Committee on February 21. Today's hearing was scheduled for opponents. Carla Mahany, Planned Parenthood of Kansas & Mid-Missouri addressed the issue of viewpoint discrimination regarding to the "Choose Life" license plate, and discussed pending lawsuits. She requested an amendment to provide for the issuance of a "pro-choice" plate (attachment 1). No one moved to adopt such amendment. No other conferees appeared. At the February 21, 2002 meeting the Committee amended **SB 518** into **SB 624**. Senator Lyon moved to recommend **SB 624**, as amended, favorable for passage. Senator Harrington seconded the motion. Motion carried. Senator Gooch wished to be recorded as not recommending the bill favorably.

SB 411: Child passenger safety and safety belts

Trista Beadles, Staff Attorney, Governor's Office, testified regarding this bill designed to fill in gaps in current child passenger safety laws. They believe this is a comprehensive proposal to provide parents information and assistance to protect children through age and size appropriate restraints (attachment 2).

Cherie Sage, Public Affairs Coordinator, American Automobile Association of Kansas, presented a brief informational video on the booster seats, as well as data related to deaths of child passengers and estimated reduction in such deaths by implementation of provisions in **SB 411**. She also explained the availability of assistance (attachment 3).

Second Lieutenant John Eichkorn, Kansas Highway Patrol explained why current law does not provide the highest level of safety. At too many accident scenes the Kansas Highway Patrol sees first hand the results of children not being adequately restrained. A short video demonstrated how disastrous lap/shoulder belts can be to a child who has outgrown the child safety seat - usually ages 4-14. He further testified that they receive numerous calls from people asking what the law says because they expect Kansas law to help them keep their children safe. Members were shown the types of "booster seats" available. Experience has also shown that an adequate fine increases compliance with the law (attachment 4).

Jim Keating, Kansas Safe Kids Coalition expressed his group's pleasure in supporting this bill. This bill is to help parents to protect their children. Mr. Keating also advised that booster seats are available through a number of community programs. There is a SAFE KID hotline, 1-800-332-6262, where parents can obtain information on local distribution points. He pointed out that the fine for violation is in line with the standard for other traffic violations (attachment 5).

Rosalie Thornburgh, Chief, Bureau of Traffic Safety, Kansas Department of Transportation,

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reported on their observations regarding child passenger safety issues and recommended passage of this bill as an important passenger safety enhancement act (attachment 6).

Julie F. Sergeant, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, testified that Kansas routinely experiences more motor vehicle crash deaths than the national average. She attached figures to her testimony showing counties with highest death rate from such crashes. Interestingly enough, those were all rural areas. Ms. Sergeant also pointed out savings resulting from use of safety seats; i.e. for every \$1.00 spent on child safety seats \$32.00 is saved, These savings result from reduced costs for insurance, traumatic brain injury services, and other health care such as hospitalization, etc. (attachment 7).

The State Child Death Review Board strongly supports this bill. They provided written testimony only (attachment 8).

Chairman Donovan explained status of this type of legislation. **HB 2145** passed both houses last year and is in conference committee. Feel that passing this bill out of committee would present a better opportunity to combine the two for more effective legislation The House also has at least two other bills on this subject, but we have no information further information on either of them.

Senator Goodwin moved to recommend **SB 411** favorable for passage. Senator Jackson wished to offer an amendment on the bill which would leave the fine at \$10.00. Senator Goodwin withdrew her motion. Senator Jackson moved to amend **SB 411** by waiving \$50.00 of the fine on page 2, line14, so that the fine would remain at \$10.00. Senator Gooch seconded the proposed amendment. Amendment carried. Senator Goodwin moved to recommend passage of **SB 411** as amended. Senator Jackson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes

Senator Gooch moved to approve minutes of the February 20 and February 21, 2002 meetings. Senator Salmans seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

The next meeting will be after turnaround, probably March 6, 2002