
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EQUIP ALL SCHOOL BUSES
PURCHASED, LEASED, OR CONTRACTED FOR USE BY THE STATE WITH
SEAT BELT ASSEMBLIES AT ALL DESIGNATED SEATING POSITIONS.

1 WHEREAS, federal and state laws require certain motor
2 vehicle drivers and passengers to use seat belts because seat
3 belts provide a measure of protection during accidents; and
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5 WHEREAS, passenger cars, light trucks, and vans are
6 required under federal law to have seat belts at all designated
7 seating positions; and
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9 WHEREAS, neither federal nor State law requires seat belts
10 on school buses that have a gross vehicle weight rating of more
11 than ten thousand pounds, which is the standard weight of a
12 large school bus; and
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14 WHEREAS, tour buses are equipped with seat belts or seat
15 assemblies, however, the Department of Education does not
16 contract with tour bus companies to transport school children;
17 and
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19 WHEREAS, section 286-181(d) and (e), Hawaii Revised
20 Statutes, allows vehicles other than school vehicles for the
21 transport of students requiring special education and services
22 and allows small buses for the transport of students to day care
23 centers, child care facilities, headstart programs, preschools,
24 and other school-related activities; and
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26 WHEREAS, despite increased federal standards for school bus
27 passenger safety and crash protection, there are still thousands
28 of injuries to children throughout the country each year due to
29 school bus accidents, causing children to suffer minor and
30 serious injuries to their heads, necks, backs, and stomachs when
31 striking the roof, windows, seat backs, and other school bus
32 passengers during crashes; and



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2 WHEREAS, a 1989 comprehensive, in-depth study by the
3 Transportation Research Board found that the inclusion of seat
4 belts on compartmentalized school buses provides additional
5 crash protection; and

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7 WHEREAS, crash test and case study data indicate that seat
8 belts provide improved crash protection and are especially
9 beneficial in side-impact and rollover school bus accidents; and

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11 WHEREAS, seat belts also reduce other types of injuries by
12 restraining children who may otherwise be out of their seats,
13 which improves passenger behavior and reduces distractions to
14 school bus drivers; and

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16 WHEREAS, seat belts provide other important benefits, such
17 as educating children about seat belt use and reinforcing seat
18 belt use in motor vehicles; and

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20 WHEREAS, states can require and equip school buses to meet
21 a higher safety standard than established under federal law; and

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23 WHEREAS, California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, New
24 York, and Texas require all large school buses to be equipped
25 with seatbelts; and

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27 WHEREAS, there is no dispute that seat belts save lives and
28 that the safety of all school children riding school buses
29 should be of paramount concern and importance to the Department
30 of Education; now, therefore,

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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
33 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016, the
34 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of
35 Education is urged to equip all school buses purchased, leased,
36 or contracted for use by the State with seat belt assemblies at
37 all designated seating positions by July 1, 2018; and

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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education
40 report to the Legislature:
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- 1 (1) No later than twenty days prior to the convening of
2 the Regular Session of 2018, on its progress in
3 equipping all school buses purchased, leased, or
4 contracted for use by the State with seat belt
5 assemblies at all designated seating positions,
6 including an explanation of the costs of procuring
7 buses equipped with seat belt assemblies, or in lieu
8 thereof the costs of retrofitting existing buses, as
9 well as information concerning the percentage that
10 retrofitted buses comprise of the total fleet of buses
11 and the school districts using those buses; and
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- 13 (2) No later than twenty days prior to the convening of
14 the Regular Session of 2019, a final report on
15 equipping all school buses purchased, leased, or
16 contracted for use by the State with seat belt
17 assemblies at all designated seating positions,
18 including a count of the number of small and large
19 buses so equipped and the percentage that equipped
20 buses comprise of the total fleet of buses and the
21 school districts using those equipped buses; and
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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
24 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chair of the Board
25 of Education and Superintendent of Education.
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OFFERED BY: *Shirley R. Jones*

