

Senate Transportation Committee

Kat Bourque 271-3091

HB 196, establishing a committee to study requiring passengers on school buses to wear seat belts.

Hearing Date: March 28, 2017

Time Opened: 1:01 p.m.

Time Closed: 1:10 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Birdsell, Gannon, Ward, Watters and Kahn

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill establishes a committee to study requiring passengers on school buses to wear seat belts.

Sponsors:

Rep. M. MacKay

Rep. LeBrun

Rep. J. MacKay

Rep. Guthrie

Sen. Lasky

Who supports the bill: Rep. Guthrie, Brian Huckins, Senator Lasky, Elizabeth Sargent (NH Association of Chiefs of Police)

Who opposes the bill: No one

Who is neutral on the bill: None one

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Rep. M. MacKay

Prime Sponsor

- This bill establishes a committee to study requiring passengers on school buses to wear seat belts.
- Recently, there was an accident in Merrimack, NH involving a school bus which left two students injured and sent to area hospitals.
- A recent crash in Tennessee also left six children killed involving a school bus accident.
- Several other incidents were noted in Rep. MacKay's written testimony.
- Constituents asked Rep. MacKay to bring forward this legislation.
- The National Transportation Safety Bureau is now recommending that seat belts on school buses become mandatory.
- Six states require seat belts on school buses.
- Although there are many factors to consider including cost, however, the value of a child's life is priceless.

- This bill passed the House 17-0 on the consent calendar.
- Senator Kahn asked how far behind New Hampshire is compared to other states. Rep. MacKay stated that there are six states currently working on this legislation.

Brian Huckins

- Mr. Huckins is from Merrimack, NH and recommends passage of this legislation.
- He added that because we teach our children to buckle up when they get in a car, buses should be treated the same.
- When buses are hit on their side or are tipped over, there are no safety precautions within the bus to prevent injury in those circumstances.
- Seatbelts will require additional funding for installation, however the cost of a lost child is far more.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition : N/A

Neutral Information Presented: N/A

Future Action: Ought to Pass

KAB
Date Hearing Report completed: March 28, 2017