

## Will Legislature (Finally) Pass Booster Seat Law?

A [recent study](#) of five states found that the number of children using car seats and booster seats increased nearly three times after the age requirement for car seat/booster seat use was raised to seven or eight years of age.

Florida law currently requires every motor vehicle operator to properly use a crash-tested, federally approved Child Restraint Device (CRD) when transporting a child five years of age or younger. For children three years of age or younger, the CRD must be a separate carrier or a vehicle manufacturer's integrated child seat. For children aged four through five years, a separate carrier, an integrated child seat, or a seat belt may be used.

The requirements do not apply to a:

- school bus;
- bus used to transport persons for compensation;
- farm tractor;
- truck of net weight of more than 26,000 pounds;
- motorcycle, moped, or bicycle;
- chauffeur-driven taxi;
- limousine;
- sedan;
- van, bus, motor coach; or
- passenger vehicle if the operator and the motor vehicle are hired and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.

[CS/HB 225](#) amends current law to require that an operator of a motor vehicle who is transporting a child who is 7 years of age or younger when that child is less than 4 feet 9 inches tall, must provide for protection of the child by properly using a crash-tested, federally approved child restraint device.

The bill also requires children who are aged 4 through 7 years, and who are less than 4 feet 9 inches tall, be transported only in a separate carrier or integrated child seat. The bill removes the provision allowing motorists to transport children aged 4 to 7 years with only a safety belt used as protection.

The requirement to use a child restraint device would not apply under the bill when a safety belt is used and the child:

- is being transported gratuitously by an operator who is not a member of the child's immediate family;
- is being transported in a medical emergency situation involving the child; or
- has a medical condition which necessitates an exception as evidenced by appropriate documentation from a health professional.



# Legislative Link

A legislative update provided by the United Way of Florida

Infractions are a moving violation punishable by a fine of \$60 plus court costs and add-ons, and by assessment of three points against the driver license.

On Monday, the House Transportation Committee passed the bill, sending it to its last two committees of references. The Senate companion bill ([CS/SB 518](#)) has passed its first two committees and awaits hearing in the Appropriations Committee before heading to the floor.

For additional information, please contact  
the United Way of Florida at: (850) 488-8276.

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