

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 36

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 115

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 36—Relative to child passenger restraint systems.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 17, 1997.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 36, Machado. Child passenger restraint systems.

This measure would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to work together to promote and support practical methods of encouraging automobile manufacturers to address problems relating to child passenger restraint systems, as prescribed.

WHEREAS, Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death and injury to children; and

WHEREAS, A properly installed child passenger restraint system can reduce the risk of serious or fatal injury to a child in a crash by 71 percent and reduce the need for hospitalization by 67 percent, and child restraint systems are 50 percent effective in preventing minor injury; and

WHEREAS, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that if all child safety seats were correctly installed in vehicles, 5,300 injuries would be prevented and the lives of 500 young children would be saved each year; and

WHEREAS, NHTSA estimates that child restraint systems saved the lives of 2,934 children under the age of five years in the United States from 1982 through 1995; and

WHEREAS, NHTSA estimates that 600 children under five years of age were killed and approximately 70,000 were injured due to improper, or lack of, use of child car safety seats in the United States in 1996; and

WHEREAS, In 1996, the Department of the California Highway Patrol issued 15,516 citations for noncompliance with child restraint system laws; and

WHEREAS, As many as 80 percent of all child safety seats are used incorrectly in the United States, and safety seat checkups conducted in California have shown that as many as 92 percent of child safety seats in the state are misused; and

WHEREAS, The Department of the California Highway Patrol reports that 30 of the 48 children under four years of age who died as passengers in 1993 were in a car seat, but only eight of those car seats were properly installed; and

WHEREAS, Of the children who died in California car accidents in 1995, 85 percent would have survived had they been sitting in correctly installed child restraint systems; and

WHEREAS, The impact received by a child in an improperly installed child restraint system at 30 miles per hour is the same as being thrown out of a third-story window; and

WHEREAS, For a child traveling in a vehicle, the most dangerous place to be is in an adult's arms, otherwise known as the "child crusher position"; and

WHEREAS, In a crash at approximately 30 miles per hour, a 10-pound infant will be ripped from a belted adult's arms with a force of almost 200 pounds; and

WHEREAS, A mother weighing 100 pounds, sharing an adult seat belt with her child, in a car traveling 25 miles per hour, on impact will throw 2,500 pounds of pressure against the child; and

WHEREAS, According to NHTSA, 479 children could have been saved nationwide in 1995 if they had been properly restrained in their child car safety seat; and

WHEREAS, For consumers the most likely point of contact for information regarding child restraint systems for new vehicles is the automobile dealer, and yet sales, service, and parts personnel are generally unaware of child restraint system installation problems and techniques, and supplemental tools needed for installation; and

WHEREAS, The only other existing sources of information and assistance about child restraint systems for consumers are printed manuals, instructions, and labels provided by child restraint system and automobile manufacturers; and

WHEREAS, While some of this information is mandated by regulation, it is often provided at the discretion of the manufacturer, and does not necessarily accurately display or describe proper installation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature encourages the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to continue developing and assembling data on CD ROM to demonstrate which child restraint systems are compatible with which vehicles; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature supports the recommendations of President Clinton that, under the National Transportation Department Plan, every child car safety seat have two standard buckles at its base, that every automobile manufacturer install standard latches in the back seat that are designed specifically to fasten these buckles, that universal attachments be developed to secure the top of the child car safety seat to the automobile's interior, and that the new safety system, referred to as the Uniform Child Restraint Anchorages (UCRA), be available for purchase by 1999; and be it further



Resolved, That the Legislature commends the General Motors Corporation for committing \$10.6 million for a five-year partnership with the National SAFE KIDS Campaign to promote correct installation and use of child restraint systems; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature commends the automobile manufacturers that are currently developing and disseminating safety information, and encourages all automobile manufacturers to develop educational materials on the correct placement and installation of child restraint systems in their vehicles for use by automobile dealer sales, service, and parts personnel, child restraint system trainers, and child restraint system manufacturers; and be it further

Resolved, That automobile dealers should have at least one person on staff who is knowledgeable about how to correctly install a child restraint system; and be it further

Resolved, That warnings of incompatibility between vehicle seating positions and child restraint systems should be prominent in automobile and child restraint system owner's manuals, as well as in vehicles; and be it further

Resolved, That child restraint system manufacturers should develop comprehensive, consistent language on and illustration of, correct installation of child restraint systems in their instruction manuals; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature encourages the manufacturers of child restraint systems to identify which automobile makes and models their products are compatible with, and enclose this information in the initial child restraint system packaging; and be it further

Resolved, That an intensive child restraint system educational campaign on the correct use and installation of child restraint systems should be undertaken by federal and state governments and automobile and child restraint system manufacturers; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature memorializes the President and Congress of the United States to work together to promote and support practical methods of encouraging automobile manufacturers to address the problems discussed in this resolution as well as the safety risks that arise because of the problems; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges the President and Congress of the United States to encourage automobile manufacturers, that are not presently informing their customers about the need to correctly install child restraint systems, to take steps to educate consumers with regard to the correct installation procedures for child restraint systems; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to each



Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and to the Chief Executive Officer of the General Motors Corporation.

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