Support Child Passenger Safety For a Safer Commonwealth

S.1960 An Act Relative to Child Passenger Safety
Sponsored by State Senator Mark Montigny

Background:

Car crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for children four years and older according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Fatalities represent only the tip of the motor vehicle crash problem for children and youth. While great progress has been made on the state level to keep children safe, more work remains for advocates of child safety and injury prevention.

The current MA state laws are silent on rear seat requirements for children ages 8 to 13 years old. As a result it is not uncommon for parents to place young children in car seats or booster seats and older children in the front seat of a motor vehicle. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, several studies have documented the benefits of rear seating for children. Estimates of the elevated risk of injury for children in the front seat compared with children in the rear have ranged from 40% to 70%.

**Car crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for children four years and older.**

How this Bill Will Help:

This bill expands on the current state laws that require children under the age of eight to be fastened and secured in a child passenger restraint and children under the age of 13 to wear a safety belt by ensuring that children under the age of 13 are seated in the rear passenger seats whenever possible.

For more information, please contact Jamie Gaynes, Government Relations Specialist at Boston Children’s Hospital at jamie.gaynes@childrens.harvard.edu or 617-919-3060.