

Seat Belts Required for All Under 18 Years

Under Senate File 2179, all kids under the age of 18 years would be required to wear a seat belt. Current law states that all kids under the age of 11 years must use a seat belt or an appropriate child safety seat. Advocates of the bill say that it is common, in cases of an accident, for an unbuckled person in the backseat to cause damage to persons in the front seat, who are buckled in.

The bill does have an exception for persons in the back seat if all seat belts are being used by other occupants.

Language in the bill states the passengers who are 14 years or older will receive a ticket for failure to use a seat belt, not the driver. Under current law, if the passenger in the front seat is not buckled up, the officer issuing the ticket has the option of issuing the ticket to the driver or the passenger.

Legislators working on the bill felt that if the passenger was old enough to get an instruction permit or license, they were old enough to be knowledgeable of the seat belt law.

Senate File 2179 has passed the Senate and is ready to be debated by the full House.