

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 323  
By: Hamilton  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Seatbelts are mandatory safety equipment that have to be worn while in an automobile. On March 29, 2006 a chartered bus transporting 23 soccer players from West Brook High School in Beaumont overturned, killing two girls, and caused numerous injuries to others on the bus. This charter bus was not equipped with seat belts. With nothing restraining students in their seats, they can be thrown around inside a bus and even ejected from a bus. The goal of this legislation is to protect the lives of school children throughout Texas.

This proposal will allow for three-point seat belts to be required for all new school buses bought by a school district on or after September 1, 2010; and for all buses that may be used for school activity to be equipped with seat belts by September 1, 2014. By allowing more than decade, school districts will be able to integrate this law in a more cost effective manner.

CSHB 323 not only addresses a school bus, but also a school activity bus, a school-chartered bus, and a bus operated by a mass transit authority under contract with a school district must be equipped with a three-point seat belt for each passenger.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

Section 547.701 is amended by adding section e.

(e) bus includes a school activity bus, or school-charted bus or a bus operated by mass transit authority under contract with the school will be equipped with a three-point seat belt for each passenger, including the operator.

(1-2) each bus that a school district purchases on or after September 1, 2010, for the transportation of schoolchildren and each bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district on or after September 1, 2014, for the transportation of schoolchildren.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2007.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE**

The committee substitute changes the phrase "seat belt" to "three-point seat belt." It also changes the date for a school district to purchase a "bus" equipped with a three-point seat belt from **September 1, 2008** to **September 1, 2010**. It also changes that a school bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district must have seat belts, from **September 1, 2017** to **September 1, 2014**.