

By: Anderson

H.B. No. 1791

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to safety seats on school buses.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 547.701, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

(a) A school bus shall be equipped with:

(1) a convex mirror or other device that reflects to the school bus operator a clear view of the area immediately in front of the vehicle that would otherwise be hidden from view; ~~and~~

(2) signal lamps that:

(A) are mounted as high and as widely spaced laterally as practicable;

(B) display four alternately flashing red lights, two located on the front at the same level and two located on the rear at the same level; and

(C) emit a light visible at a distance of 500 feet in normal sunlight; and

(3) for a school bus acquired on or after September 1, 2007, a safety seat for each passenger other than the driver.

(e) In this section, "safety seat" means a seat that:

(1) is padded;

(2) has a back at least 28 inches high; and

(3) is equipped with a three-point lap and shoulder

1 harness.

2 SECTION 2. Chapter 34, Education Code, is amended by adding
3 Sections 34.012 and 34.013 to read as follows:

4 Sec. 34.012. SAFETY SEAT INSTRUCTION. The State Board of
5 Education shall develop and make available to each school district
6 a program of instruction in the proper use of a safety seat, as
7 defined by Section 547.701, Transportation Code.

8 Sec. 34.013. RETROFITTING SCHOOL BUSES WITH SAFETY
9 SEATS. (a) Each year a school district shall evaluate the
10 district's school buses to determine which buses, if any, can be
11 retrofitted with safety seats, as defined by Section 547.701,
12 Transportation Code.

13 (b) A school district that elects to retrofit a school bus
14 with safety seats shall contract with the Texas Department of
15 Criminal Justice for the retrofitting.

16 SECTION 3. Section 42.155, Education Code, is amended by
17 adding Subsection (1) to read as follows:

18 (1) A school district is entitled to reimbursement for one
19 half the cost of retrofitting school buses with safety seats under
20 Section 34.013.

21 SECTION 4. As soon as practicable after the effective date
22 of this Act, the State Board of Education shall develop and make
23 available the program of instruction relating to safety seats in
24 accordance with Section 34.012, Education Code, as added by this
25 Act.

26 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
27 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as

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1 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
3 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.