

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 955
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Transportation
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to a recent report issued by a national pediatric organization, children under the age of two are substantially less likely to be killed or suffer severe injuries in a passenger vehicle crash if they are riding in a rear-facing car seat. Interested parties contend that current state law doesn't adequately address this issue and further point to the organization's recommendations urging parents to keep a child in a rear-facing car seat until the child is two years old or until the child exceeds the height and weight limit for the car seat because this type of seat provides better support to and distribution of force over the entire body of an infant or toddler involved in a vehicle crash. H.B. 955 seeks to address this issue.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

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

H.B. 955 amends the Transportation Code to make it a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than \$25 and not more than \$250 to operate a passenger vehicle and transport a child who is younger than two years of age while not keeping the child secured during the operation of the vehicle in a rear-facing child passenger safety seat system according to the system manufacturer's instructions, unless the child's height or weight exceeds the limits established by the manufacturer.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2015.