

HCS HB 90 -- SEAT BELTS

SPONSOR: St. Onge

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Transportation by a vote of 8 to 2.

This substitute requires all drivers and passengers in cars or trucks to wear a seat belt. Exemptions are allowed for United States Postal Service employees while performing their duties, persons operating or riding a motor vehicle being used in agricultural work-related activities, and persons with a medical reason with documentation from a physician.

The substitute also clarifies existing language which allows a person to ride without a seat belt when there are more persons than there are seat belts.

Currently, each driver and front-seat passenger of passenger cars and trucks with a licensed gross weight under 12,000 pounds must wear a seat belt, and a person cannot be stopped solely for a seat belt violation.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that upgrading Missouri's seat belt law from secondary to primary enforcement is the most effective way for Missouri to reduce traffic deaths, injuries, and their costs. Primary seat belt usage could possibly save the lives of 90 Missouri residents and prevent approximately 1,000 serious injuries each year.

Testifying for the bill were Representative St. Onge; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, United States Department of Transportation; Department of Transportation; National Safety Council; Missouri Safety Council; Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety; Matthew Cushman; Randy Jotte, MD, American College of Medical Physicians; Jefferson County Sheriff's Office; Donald E. Evans; Highway and Transportation Employees' Association; State Farm Insurance Companies; Heavy Contractors Association of Greater Kansas City; Missouri Insurance Coalition; American Insurance Association; Missouri Hospital Association; Caitlin Stumpe; Cheri and Steven Bowden; Megan McDevitt; Lievi Allen; Mothers Against Drunk Driving-Missouri; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Property Casualty Insurers Association of America; 3M/Traffic Control Material Division; Central Missouri State University; Associated General Contractors of St. Louis; St. Charles County Ambulance District; AAA Auto Club of Missouri; Sharee Galnore, Cape Girardeau Safe Communities Program; Cape