



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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### **Reps. Tusler and Taylor Introduce Bill to Update Child Safety Seat Laws** *Medical guidelines reveal statutes are dangerously out of date*

MADISON – Today, Representatives Ron Tusler (R-Harrison) and Chris Taylor (D-Madison) introduced legislation that would update Wisconsin’s statutes on child safety seats to ensure our laws are not putting children and families at risk. Wisconsin currently allows children over 1 year old, or 20 pounds to sit in a front-facing car seat. However, evidence and guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics clearly show keeping young children in rear-facing car seats for as long as possible, or until they are at least two years old, maximizes their safety and chances of surviving serious car crashes.

The proposed legislation updates our statutes to be in line with medical guidelines by requiring infants and toddlers be in a rear-facing car seat system until they are at least two years old and advising that children over age two can be rear-facing until they outgrow the height and weight requirements.

Upon introduction of the bill, Reps. Tusler and Taylor, along with child safety experts and medical professionals, released the following statements:

“I want to do everything I can to protect my daughter and all the young babies of Wisconsin, said Rep. Tusler. “It is undisputed fact that children under two years old are safer in rear facing car seats. I’ll be putting my daughter in a rear facing car seat until she is at least two and I think you should too.”

“Infants and toddlers under three have the highest number of deaths from crashes each year,” said Rep. Taylor. “Many of these injuries and deaths can be prevented by proper use of car seats, boosters, and seat belts, but it’s confusing for parents when our statutes say one thing, but their pediatrician says another. This simple bill updates our statutes, not only to alleviate this confusion, but to save the lives of our youngest kids, and to give parents the safest, most accurate information.”

“The science of how we can best protect children evolves as we learn more,” said Dr. Dipesh Navsaria, President of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. “Extensive research has shown that keeping children in rear-facing car seats as long as possible is the best positioning in order to turn fatal motor vehicle crashes into survivable ones. A broken leg or arm is repairable — a broken neck or bleed around the brain is far more challenging.”

“As a pediatrician, I support this bill to update our laws on child safety seats to keep our Wisconsin children as safe as possible while riding in a motor vehicle” said Dr. Mala Mathur, Past President of the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Libbe Slavin of Safe Kids Wisconsin Director said “Safe Kids Wisconsin’s mission is to protect children from preventable injuries and this bill is right in line with that. We have the ability to save lives with this simple piece of legislation.”

“As a pediatric trauma surgeon, my favorite patients are the ones I never meet because their car seats protected them,” said Dr. Jonathan Koehler, Trauma Medical Director and Surgeon.

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