

Testimony for Select Committee on Children  
Submitted by the CDSP  
Mar. 6, 2012

Re: Raised Bill No. 295

The Connecticut Driving School Professionals is on record as being in strong opposition to Raised Bill No. 295. This bill would allow newly licensed teens to carry siblings during their first six months of licensed driving with no parent or guardian present in the car under certain conditions. Currently, these newly licensed teens, age 16 or 17, cannot carry siblings during the first six months after the state issues them a license. This limitation should be retained.

According to many research organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, teen drivers are more than four times more likely than an older driver to crash. The Highway Loss Data Institute has noted that crash rates for young drivers are high largely because of their immaturity and inexperience. This Institute has also found that crashes often occur when other teens are in the vehicle, meaning that teenagers are disproportionately represented among crash casualties as passengers as well as drivers. Insurance industry statistics note that the first six months of driving are the most dangerous for teenage drivers. This is exactly the period that teens are now precluded from carrying siblings. Put bluntly, why would any parent want to expose their other children to this heightened risk in the name of convenience?

Siblings often have an antagonistic relationship that, if it is carried to the car, has the potential to serve as an additional distraction, as if there are not enough driving distractions already.

The CDSP fully recognizes that parents are busy and stressed. However, this organization, which deals with thousands of new teenage drivers every year, believes that convenience should not be allowed to trump safety.