



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

81 Wolcott Hill Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109-1242 - (860) 571-7446 - Fax (860) 571-7452 - Email admin@cabe.org

Testimony

**Testimony submitted to
the Transportation Committee
March 2, 2016**

HB 5462 AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSTALLATION OF SEAT SAFETY BELT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education opposes HB 5462, An Act Requiring the Installation of Seat Safety Belts on School Buses.

CABE is concerned about school districts capacity to ramp up to comply with three-point lap and shoulder seat belts. There are numerous years of buses that would need to be replaced or retrofitted. Even with the 2021 compliance date we already know of districts that have buses they use that are older than 5 years old in their fleet. Buying new buses at a more than anticipated pace will have a financial impact on a board of education's budget.

We also have concerns about requiring passengers to wear the belts as some students are very young and might unclick the belt. The bus driver is responsible for driving the bus safely and could not know or be responsible for making sure the students continue to wear their seatbelts. Employing a monitor would add to a district budget.

There are also concerns about the youngest students being able to get out of a seat belt in an emergency. We are aware of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration work on school bus seatbelts and seek their guidance.

CABE continues to be concerned about student safety AND must be also concerned about funding.

Thank you for your consideration on this issue.