OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 7196

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING SEAT BELTS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires everyone in a motor vehicle or fire-fighting apparatus to wear a seat belt while the vehicle is moving. Under current law, only the driver and front seat passengers must wear seat belts, with certain exceptions (e.g., passengers under age 16).

Existing law requires seat belt use only in vehicles that are originally equipped with them. The bill additionally exempts vehicles manufactured prior to January 1, 1968. Thus, the bill eliminates the requirement to wear a seatbelt in any vehicle manufactured before 1968, even those originally equipped with seatbelts. The bill also exempts passengers on motor vehicles designed to carry more than ten people (i.e., a bus as defined under 49 U.S.C. § 30127).

As under current law, failure to wear a seat belt is not probable cause for law enforcement to search the vehicle and its contents. Failure to wear a seat belt is an infraction, and violators face a fine of (1) $50 if the vehicle operator is age 18 or older or (2) $75 if the vehicle operator is under age 18.

The bill also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

HB 7140, favorably reported by the Transportation Committee, contains a substantially similar provision requiring back seat passengers to wear seat belts.
COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 23  Nay 0 (03/08/2019)