

2015 -- H 6217

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LC002709
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES
GENERALLY

Introduced By: Representatives Nardolillo, McNamara, Williams, Shekarchi, and
Lancia

Date Introduced: May 20, 2015

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-23-41 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-23 entitled
2 "Equipment and Accessories Generally" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-23-41. Safety belts in public service vehicles.** -- (a) Every jitney, bus, private bus,
4 school bus, and trackless trolley coach, when operated upon a highway, shall be equipped with a
5 driver's seat safety belt device sufficiently anchored and attached and so constructed, designed,
6 and installed as to support a loop-load strength of not less than five thousand pounds (5,000 lbs.)
7 and a buckle or closing device which shall be of a construction and design that it can be released
8 with one hand with a pull of less than forty-five pounds (45 lbs.). Every person when driving any
9 vehicle of this kind shall use and have his or her body anchored by the seat safety belt. Violation
10 of this section shall constitute a civil violation.

11 (b) Effective August 1, 2015, every school bus purchased for use in the state shall be
12 equipped with safety belts for the operator and each passenger seat.

13 (c) Effective August 1, 2015, any person who is an operator of or passenger in a school
14 bus shall wear a seat belt assembly as defined by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 209
15 while the vehicle is in operation on any of the roadways, streets, or highways of this state.
16 Provided, that in no event shall failure to wear a child passenger restraint system or regular seat
17 belt be considered as contributory or comparative negligence, nor the failure to wear said child
18 passenger restraint system, regular seat belt, or shoulder harness be admissible as evidence in the

1 [trial of any civil action.](#)

2 [\(d\) If any person is deemed to be in violation of subsection \(c\) of this section, the](#)
3 [operator of the school bus shall be fined thirty dollars \(\\$30.00\) for each offense.](#)

4 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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1 This act would require that effective August 1, 2015, all school buses purchased for use
2 in the state be equipped with seat belt assemblies for each passenger and operator seat, and would
3 further require mandatory safety belt use by the school bus operator and each passenger.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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