

May 12, 2015

The Honorable Bradley Hutto
South Carolina State Senate
510 Gressette Building
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Senator Hutto,

Thank you for your leadership in introducing SB 464 to make South Carolina's laws stronger to protect the most vulnerable people in that state, our children. The use of booster seats reduces the risk of serious injury by 45 percent in comparison to seat belts for children 4 to 8 years of age. Your bill would respond to this evidence by requiring small kids to remain in car seats during these years and prohibiting children from sitting in the front seat up to age 13. This would bring South Carolina traffic safety laws in line with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and other experts.

Safe Kids Worldwide is a global network of organizations dedicated to protecting kids from unintentional injuries, the number one cause of death to children in the United States. We work with a network of more than 500 coalitions in the U.S. and in 25 countries on child safety issues including injuries on highways and involving motor vehicles. Safe Kids South Carolina and its 13 coalitions are heroes in efforts to make kids safer.

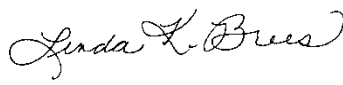
According to a Safe Kids report released last year, in 2012 South Carolina had the seventh highest motor vehicle crash fatality rate among children ages 4 to 8 years old in the country, at 16.1 fatalities per 100,000. The use of seat belts for kids 4-8 is an ineffective way to protect a child in a car, and could cause injury to kids because of where the belt sits on a child that young. The safest place for children is always in the back seat.

Passage of this bill would be an important advancement for the safety of South Carolina's children. Safe Kids Worldwide and South Carolina coalitions stand ready to help you in this effort in any way that we can.

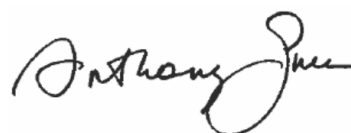
Sincerely,



Heidi Aakjer
Coordinator/Manager
Safe Kids South Carolina



Linda Brees
Coalition Coordinator
Safe Kids Upstate



Anthony Green
Director of Public Policy
Safe Kids Worldwide

