

News Release

Contact: Brian Newbacher
Phone: 216-606-6701

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 18, 2008

**OHIO BOOSTER COALITION APPLAUDS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON PASSAGE OF BOOSTER SEAT LEGISLATION
*OHIO NOW THE 44TH STATE TO ENACT SUCH A LAW***

(CLEVELAND, OH / DECEMBER 18, 2008): The Ohio Booster Seat Coalition today praised members of the General Assembly for passage of a law that requires federally approved booster seats for children ages 4 through 7 and who are under 4 feet, 9 inches in height. Assuming Gov. Ted Strickland will sign the bill, Ohio will be the 44th state to enact a booster seat law.

Substitute House Bill 320 was voted out of the Ohio Senate last night, 27-5, and then the House of Representatives concurred with Senate changes, 79-14. The House originally approved the bill on April 30 by an 85-10 vote.

The bill was changed from a primary to a secondary enforcement measure, meaning that law enforcement officers can only cite a motorist for a violation if they are pulled over for another reason.

"The Coalition supported this change because parents look to laws for guidance, especially in matters of traffic safety," said Brian Newbacher, Public Relations Manager for AAA East Central, and Boost Ohio Kids Coalition Spokesperson. "In fact, in states that have a booster seat law, parents are 54 percent more likely to use them (according to a study by AAA)."

In a recent six-year-period in Ohio, from 2002 through 2007, motor vehicle crashes killed 89 children ages 4-8 and injured more than 21,000 (21,327) in the same age group, according to the Ohio Department of Public Safety.

"With passage of this law, Ohio can expect to see an increase in booster seat usage and a subsequent decrease in fatalities and injuries," said Newbacher.

Boost Ohio Kids



Ohio Conference
of AAA Clubs

Page 2 ...

"Children, 4 to 8 years-old, are too small to be protected adequately by the car's seat belt system, which is designed for an adult."

The Ohio Booster Seat Coalition is made up of the Ohio Conference of AAA Clubs, the Ohio Children's Hospital Association, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Safe Kids and others in an alliance of broad-based support for this life-saving legislation. A Web site, www.boostohiokids.org, serves as an informational resource.

Booster seats help protect children from injury and death in crashes by ensuring that the adult seat belt fits properly. Proper fit reduces the risk of "lap belt syndrome," which occurs when the lap belt portion of the adult seat belt rides up into a child's abdomen, potentially causing internal injuries to vital organs.

###