

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

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ARGEO PAUL CELLUCCI
GOVERNOR

JANE SWIFT
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

October 22, 1999

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

I am filing today for your consideration the attached legislation entitled "An Act to Ensure Driver and Passenger Safety."

Currently, law enforcement officers may stop motor vehicles and enforce safety belt use where children under the age of 12 are not protected by safety belts or child passenger restraints. This legislation will amend the current law to allow law enforcement officers to stop motor vehicles where drivers or occupants are age 18 or younger and are not wearing safety belts.

Alarming statistics demonstrate the clear need for this legislation. Over the past four years, 344 young people have been killed on Massachusetts roads. Statistics indicate that young teens are most at risk on our State's roadways because of their failure to use safety belts. By requiring young people to buckle up, we will be encouraging responsible driving habits, and increasing highway safety.

This legislation will reduce occupant injury and fatality rates for teens, provide safer roadways, and, ultimately, save lives.

I urge your prompt and favorable consideration of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Argeo Paul Cellucci".

Argeo Paul Cellucci
Governor

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Nine.

AN ACT TO ENSURE DRIVER AND PASSENGER SAFETY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Section 13A of Chapter 90 of the General Laws, as appearing
2 in the 1998 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting in
3 line 32 after the word "offense" the following words:— ; pro-
4 vided, however, that law enforcement officers may stop any motor
5 vehicle and enforce this section if the operator or any passenger in
6 the motor vehicle is not wearing a safety belt and is 18 years of
7 age or younger. Nothing in this section shall limit a law enforce-
8 ment officer's authority to stop a motor vehicle for a violation of
9 Section 7AA of this Chapter.