



Testimony before the  
**House Committee on Transportation**  
on  
**HB 2008 – regarding seat belts on school buses**

by

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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on **HB 2008**, regarding seat belts on school buses. While KASB shares the sponsor's concern for student safety, we appear today in opposition to the bill.

Researchers have conducted numerous studies with conflicting conclusions on the advisability of fitting school bus seats with safety harnesses. The findings ultimately depend on the type of crash studied. Generally speaking, school bus safety experts recommend students NOT wear seat belts not only because school buses are built with extra safety features, but also because students who are not belted in can be more quickly and safely evacuated from a bus than those who are wearing seat belts.

In addition, concerns arise about who would be responsible for making sure students, particularly the youngest school bus passengers, are properly buckled in.

KASB, as the representative of locally-elected school boards, feels the decision to fit school buses with seat belts is the responsibility of the local boards, who are best informed about their constituents' opinions on the need for seat belts in school buses and their willingness for their school district to bear the substantial additional cost involved in purchasing seat belt-equipped school buses. If HB 2008 is enacted, we would request the Legislature provide additional funding to purchase those school buses.

Thank you, and I am happy to respond to questions at the appropriate time.