



April 12, 2016

The Honorable Lesil McGuire
Senate Judiciary Chair
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol, Room 124
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: HB 308 Child Safety Seat Installation Liability

Dear Senator McGuire:

Thank you for scheduling HB 308 relating to child safety seat installation liability. Safe Kids Kenai Peninsula and Central Peninsula Hospital support passage of this legislation. Currently, I am the only Child Passenger Safety Instructor on the Kenai Peninsula and I mentor 23 Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPST) on the peninsula with technicians in Homer, Kenai, Nikiski, Soldotna and Seward.

The National Highway Transportation & Safety Administration (NHTSA) Fatality analysis reporting system (FARS) maintains that child safety seats, booster seats, and seat belts provide the key to reducing motor vehicle fatalities. Alaska data currently indicates an 85% misuse rate of each car seat inspected. This means 4 out of 5 car seats have at least one misuse. Proper car seat installation and inspection is critical for saving the lives of children. We provide education for families as to the proper method to secure their child in the proper age associated safety seat in addition to installing these seats. This process is time intensive and can take up to thirty minutes per child.

What we do locally today:

- Our local fire departments have CPST's who are check car seats installations and assist the public with their questions on car seats but this is only if they are not busy on calls or unavailable due to their work schedules.
- Central Peninsula Hospital policy in the Obstetrics department is that a CPST is on duty at all times and checks all newborn discharges in their car seats. This does not cover non hospital patients.
- We host community car seat events throughout the peninsula often with the local fire departments but there are times when the department CPST's are not available to assist with the events.
- As the CPSI and coordinator of Safe Kids Kenai I serve as the resource for CPS questions and concerns and appointments during my work week.

Central Peninsula
General Hospital,
Inc, d/b/a

Central
Peninsula
Hospital

Heritage Place

Serenity House
Treatment
Center

While providing the community with CPS education and assistance with installations, we know we could reach many more families and children by training more community volunteers in this field. The missing link to community volunteers is providing the layer of protection of liability risk as long as they follow the NHTSA standards provided in the 3 day training course. In addition, more CPST's who are off duty from their agencies would likely be more willing to assist with community events if there was not the unnecessary liability risk.

By supporting House Bill 308, you will make a positive impact the lives of Alaskan children, both now and for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Jane B. Fellman RN
Coordinator Safe Kids Kenai Peninsula Coalition
Central Peninsula Hospital

Cc: Senate Judiciary Members