

THE CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

2021 Bill Highlights

As of 5/3/2021

SB 380 & HB 297 – Child Restraint Requirements

Sponsors: Senator Perry (R - Gainesville) & Representative Hinson (D - Gainesville)

Outcome: SB 380 made it into the other chamber. HB 297 died in its first committee.

Target Population: Any child younger than age 7 and their parents

Summary: Increases the age requirement for use of child restraints in a motor vehicle from age 5 to 6 for children. Requires a separate carrier, integrated child seat, or child booster seat be used in certain transportation instances.

How the Bills Differ:

- The bills are identical

Impact: Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children in the United States, and the second cause of death for Florida children. In 2017, over 8,000 Florida children ages 5-11 were killed or injured in a motor vehicle crash. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, booster seat use reduces the risk of serious injury by 45% in children 4-8 years compared to seat belt use alone. States that have increased the age requirement for booster



seats to age 7 or 8 have seen the use of booster seats go up while children who suffer fatal or serious injuries went down significantly.

Advocates want 235,000 additional Florida children protected by requiring the correct child restraint device. Increasing the requirement by one year brings the state closer to the suggested minimum requirement of 8 years by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Encouraging parents to make choices that will reduce the probability of injury to their child is an important step to keep children safe. The Children's Campaign supports keeping children safe in motor vehicles by shielding them from severe injury in accidents.

Effective Date: July 1st, 2021