

ASSEMBLY, No. 629

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RALPH R. CAPUTO

District 28 (Essex)

Assemblyman THOMAS P. GIBLIN

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Assemblywoman GABRIELA M. MOSQUERA

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblywoman ANGELICA M. JIMENEZ

District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)

Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI

District 33 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblywoman N.Munoz, Assemblyman Holley, Assemblywomen
Chaparro and Dunn**

SYNOPSIS

Establishes public awareness campaign concerning the dangers of leaving children unattended in and around motor vehicles.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/20/2020)

1 **AN ACT** concerning unattended children in motor vehicles and
2 supplementing Title 39 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6

7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. Statistics show that, on average, 38 children die each year
9 from heat-related deaths after being trapped inside motor vehicles,
10 and even the most well intentioned parents or caregivers can
11 unknowingly leave a sleeping baby in a car resulting in the child's
12 injury or even death.

13 b. The temperature of a vehicle, even with an open window,
14 can rise rapidly and a child may easily incur heat stroke, causing
15 brain damage or death within minutes.

16 c. In addition to heat stroke, the consequences of leaving a
17 child unattended in and around a motor vehicle include the dangers
18 of abduction, strangulation, trunk entrapment, being run over, and
19 personal injuries caused by accidental and uncontrolled movement
20 of the vehicle.

21 d. While motor vehicle related injuries are a leading cause of
22 death among children in the United States, the deaths and injuries
23 caused by leaving children unattended in and around motor vehicles
24 are predictable and preventable and can be greatly reduced with
25 increased awareness of the risks associated with this dangerous
26 practice.

27 e. A public awareness campaign to provide information to, and
28 promote educational programs for, families, teachers, and
29 community members regarding the dangers of children being left
30 unattended in and around motor vehicles is in the public interest
31 and will serve the interests of public safety in this State.

32

33 2. a. The Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the
34 Department of Law and Public Safety, in consultation with the
35 Department of Children and Families, shall establish a public
36 awareness campaign to provide information to the general public
37 concerning:

38 (1) the dangers of leaving a child unattended in and around a
39 motor vehicle; and

40 (2) preventative measures that may be taken by parents or
41 guardians to promote child safety and protect against injuries or
42 death caused by leaving a child unattended in and around a motor
43 vehicle.

44 b. The Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety shall
45 provide printed and electronic educational materials concerning
46 child safety in and around motor vehicles and shall disseminate
47 those materials: to child care centers licensed pursuant to P.L.1983,
48 c.492 (C.30:5B-1 et seq.); at public venues throughout the State;

1 and by any other means as the director may determine, in
2 collaboration with, and with the assistance of, other State, county,
3 and municipal governmental entities including, but not limited to,
4 distribution on the premises of, or through mail or electronic
5 communications by, any office that is open to members of the
6 general public and is operated, administered, or used to provide
7 services to the general public by the Department of Children and
8 Families and the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

9 c. The Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety shall
10 report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2
11 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than 24 months after the
12 effective date of this act, on the activities and accomplishments of
13 the public awareness campaign.

14
15 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

16
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18 STATEMENT

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20 This bill requires the Division of Highway Traffic Safety in the
21 Department of Law and Public Safety, in consultation with the
22 Department of Children and Families, to establish a public
23 awareness campaign to inform the general public about the dangers
24 of leaving children unattended in and around motor vehicles and the
25 preventative measures that may be taken by parents or guardians to
26 promote child safety and protect against injury or death.

27 The bill requires the Director of the Division of Highway Traffic
28 Safety to provide printed and electronic educational materials
29 concerning child safety in and around motor vehicles. These
30 materials are to be disseminated at State-licensed child care centers
31 and public venues throughout the State. The materials also may be
32 disseminated on the premises of other governmental entities, such
33 as those offices of the Department of Children and Families and the
34 New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission that are open to the general
35 public.

36 The bill requires the director of the division to report to the
37 Governor and the Legislature on the activities and accomplishments
38 of the public awareness campaign no later than 24 months after the
39 bill's effective date.

40 The bill is scheduled to take effect immediately upon enactment.