

MEDICAL SOCIETY
of the
STATE OF NEW YORK

Morris Auster, Esq.
Senior Vice President /
Chief Legislative Counsel

Division of Governmental Affairs
MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

PASSED SENATE

S. 4336 (CARLUCCI)

ON ASSEMBLY CALENDAR

A. 6163 (MOSLEY)

**An act to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to
mandatory seat belt use**

This bill would require safety belts for persons 16 years and younger in are back seat passengers in a motor vehicle. The Medical Society of the State of New York supports this measure.

The MSSNY House of Delegates recently unanimously adopted policy urging that seat belts be required in both front and rear seats. One of the safest choices drivers and passengers can make is to buckle up and 89.6% of drivers and passengers buckled up in 2018, saving 14,955 lives. According to the 2015 data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Committee, 4.3% of 22,441 fatalities — or 966 deaths — involved unrestrained people in rear seats. Research also found that unbuckled rear-seat travelers are eight times as likely as buckled rear-seat passengers to be injured or killed in a crash.

Thirty-eight states have laws that allow police officers to ticket a driver if the driver or the front-seat passenger is not wearing a seat belt, while only 18 states have the same laws for rear-seat riders. Those laws, along with police checks, public education campaigns, and seat-belt reminder systems, have helped increase use of seat belts in all seats. Rear seating passengers who are older are less likely than front-seat passengers to wear a seat belt, making them more likely to injure themselves and drivers or other passengers in a crash. Adult rear-row occupants were less likely to use seat belts, with just 70 percent of those ages 20 to 54, and 86 percent of those 55 and older using restraints, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. According IHS, adult rear seat passengers are at greater risk for chest injuries and traumatic brain injuries than front seat passengers.

For all the reasons cited above, the Medical Society of the State of New York supports this measure and urges it support.

Respectfully submitted,

Division of Governmental Affairs

pfc/support
6/12/19