



**AUTO ALLIANCE**  
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January 16, 2014

Hon. William J. Lippert, Chairman  
House Committee on Judiciary  
Vermont State House , Room 30  
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Chairman Lippert:

I am writing on behalf of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers to express our strong support of the committee's efforts to require primary enforcement of Vermont's seatbelt laws. The Alliance is a trade association of twelve car and light truck manufacturers including BMW Group, Chrysler Group LLC, Ford Motor Company, General Motors Company, Jaguar Land Rover, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz USA, Mitsubishi Motors, Porsche, Toyota, Volkswagen Group of America, and Volvo Cars.

Seatbelts have saved more lives than any other safety system in today's passenger vehicles and their usage maximizes the safety potential of other safety systems within vehicles as well. According to the most recent data available from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, changing from secondary to primary enforcement of seatbelt laws, should lead to an increase in belt use by 6% - resulting in approximately 2 lives saved and 13 serious injuries avoided every year in Vermont. This change will also help to decrease traffic-crash related health care costs for Vermont, currently estimated at \$39 million annually. With these statistics in mind, the Alliance and its members support primary enforcement of all seatbelt laws.

By eliminating the secondary enforcement provisions in the state's existing seatbelt laws, law enforcement officials will be able to stop and ticket seatbelt violators as they can for any other traffic infraction. This is not a radical proposition or an infringement on personal rights. Seatbelt laws already exist in Vermont; the issue is how they can be enforced. Thirty-three states already have such laws.

This no-cost, big savings bill is a great opportunity for legislators to positively impact the safety of Vermont's drivers. For this reason, and those outlined above, we urge favorable consideration of such legislation.

Sincerely,

Wayne Weikel  
Director of State Affairs

CC: House Judiciary Committee

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Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers

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1401 Eye Street, N.W, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005-6562 • Phone 202.326.5500 • Fax 202.326.5567 •

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