

CRISTINA GARCIA

ASSEMBLY MEMBER

58TH DISTRICT

CAPITOL OFFICE
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0058
PHONE: (916) 319-2058

E-MAIL: ASSEMBLYMEMBER.GARCIA@ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV



DISTRICT OFFICE
8255 FIRESTONE BLVD SUITE 203
DOWNEY, CA 90241
PHONE: (562) 861-5803

WEBSITE: WWW.ASSEMBLY.CA.GOV/GARCIA

Press Release

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**Contact: Elena Lee
(916) 319-2058**

Car Seat Safety Measure by Assemblymember Cristina Garcia Signed by Governor

(Sacramento) –Assemblymember Cristina Garcia (D-Bell-Gardens) with the support of statewide medical groups and insurance organizations has announced that her child car seat safety bill, **Assembly Bill 53**, has been signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown.

AB 53 would require children, up to two years old, to remain in rear facing car seats. Currently, children are required to ride rear facing only until 1 year of age.

“This new law is a victory for children and families. The Governor and the administration should be commended for their foresight and commitment to child safety,” Garcia said.

Garcia commented that she was encouraged by the strong support AB 53 received, to make California the third state in the nation to mandate this major child safety improvement, “With this easy modification, California will be a leader in preventing needless tragedy and saving the lives our children.”

Despite studies and educational campaigns by doctors and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, not enough parents are changing their behavior. An overwhelming number of parents still place their children in a forward facing position too early.

According to medical professionals the heads of young children are heavier and their necks and spinal cords are not fully developed. In an accident, young children facing forward have a 75% greater chance of injuring their spines or even breaking their necks, due to impact.

“As the statistics show, this simple change in car seat position will make sure our next generation will be safer on our roads.” Garcia concluded.

AB 53 is supported by a wide coalition, including the American College of Emergency Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Personal Insurance Federation of California, California State PTA and the California State Firefighters’ Association.

AB 53 will be effective January 2017.

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