

Save Florida's Trauma Care

It's Critical



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

GOVERNOR SIGNS HB 1697

Bill Will Help Make Florida Roadways Safer and Helps Support Florida's Trauma Centers

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (June 10, 2005) – Governor Bush signed House Bill (HB) 1697 into law which will help provide numerous highway safety measures for the state of Florida.

"This is a very important and extensive bill that had to be done this year," said Rep. Greg Evers (R-Milton), Vice Chair of the House Transportation Committee. "Without this bill, Florida would have lost about 50 million in Federal transportation dollars. I want to thank Sen. Sebesta and Gov. Bush for their continued support of transportation and highway safety."

SB 1697 includes:

- Increased penalties for motorists who cause serious injuries or fatalities in traffic accidents. The increase will be \$500 for each serious injury and \$1,000 for each fatality. The additional funds raised will go to help support Florida's trauma centers. The change is expected to generate as much as \$4.7 million annually for the state's trauma centers.
- Allow police officers to stop and cite the driver of a vehicle where the children inside are not using proper safety restraints (i.e. seatbelt, car seat or booster seat).
- Make it illegal to purchase traffic signal preemption devices.
- Enables Florida to become compliant with the federal Patriot Act and save the state \$50 million.

"We would like to thank Governor Bush, Senator Sebesta, and the entire Senate and House for creating this new law," said Amy Maguire, director, Alliance to Save Florida's Trauma Care. "This legislation will help provide a much needed reoccurring funding stream for Florida's trauma centers."

The Alliance to Save Florida's Trauma Care consists of trauma centers, advocacy organizations, patients, medical personnel, providers and concerned citizens. Our goal is to inform and educate Floridians and our legislators about the impending crisis and to help find solutions for this problem.

For additional information, access www.SaveFloridaTrauma.org or call (888) 536-7806.

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