

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE State Representative Ruth Fahrbach



Tougher teen driving laws take effect Aug. 1

In response to a number of teenage-driver related accidents around the state in the last several months, the legislature enacted a law with a series of new regulations and requirements for new teen drivers and parents alike.

The new law is not perfect and contains some provisions I do not support, however it is not completely without merit and is certainly well-intended. Below is a summary of the new law which took effect on Aug. 1.

Public Act 08-32 establishes several new requirements for 16- and 17-year-olds, and in some cases their parents or legal guardians, both before and after they get their drivers' licenses.

Highlights of the new law, according to the non-partisan Office of Legislative Research:

- Further restricts the passengers they may carry while being instructed under a learner's permit.
- Extends passenger restrictions that previously applied for the first six months after licensure to an entire year, but authorizes the motor vehicle commissioner to provide exceptions by regulation for single parents under age 18 transporting their children for certain purposes.
- Begins the nighttime hours when 16- or 17-year-olds cannot drive for most purposes at 11 p. m. instead of midnight.
- For anyone issued a learner's permit on or after August 1, 2008, increases from 20 to 40 hours the amount of behind-the-wheel, on-the-road training a 16- or 17-year-old must get before qualifying for licensure.
- Requires license suspensions for any violations of post-licensure driving restrictions for 16- and 17-year-olds, instead of only for second or subsequent violations.
- Establishes mandatory license suspension requirements for 16- and 17-year-olds who violate certain traffic laws that are longer than the ones that currently apply to older drivers and, in other cases, applicable only to 16- and 17-year-olds.
- For 16- or 17-year-olds issued learners' permits on or after August 1, 2008, requires a parent or guardian to attend two hours of instruction on teen driving

laws and related issues with the child before a 16- or 17-year-old can take the license test.

- Requires anyone in a vehicle with a 16- or 17-year-old driver to wear a seat belt and increases the penalty for anyone in a vehicle being driven by someone under age 18 who violates the seat belt law.

For a copy of the new driving law, you can contact my office at 240-8700, or check out www.ct.gov/teendriving/lib/teendriving/handoutteen_lawssupplementfinal.pdf on the Web for more information.

State Rep. Ruth Fahrback represents the 61st District, including Suffield, and parts of Windsor and East Granby, in the General Assembly.