

## House Republican Press Release

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### **Rep. Miller: Measure Okayed by State House will Make Teens Better Drivers, Save Lives**



#### ***Bill Requires More Road Training; Targets Unsafe Teen Driving Habits***

A measure approved by the state House of Representatives requires more behind the wheel training before 16- and 17-year olds can receive their drivers' licenses and targets unsafe driving habits to help bring down the number of serious and fatal motor vehicle accidents involving teenagers, state Representative Lawrence G. Miller said today.

The bill, which passed the House Wednesday on a 109 – 33 vote, was transmitted to the state Senate, which was expected to act on it later in the evening, said Representative Miller, R-122<sup>nd</sup> District, who spoke in favor of the measure during debate on the floor of the House.

“The six weeks of driver education training, which teenagers currently have to complete before being licensed to operate a motor vehicle, did not give them enough behind the wheel experience to enable them to drive safely on secondary roads, let alone interstate highways like I-95 or I-84,” Representative Miller said. “This legislation increases the amount of on the road training they must receive to qualify for a driver’s license from 20 to 40 hours, which should make parents more confident when their sons and daughters take the wheel for the first time on their own.”

“The measure also requires more parental involvement in their children’s driver education training to ensure they are aware of traffic laws and penalties that specifically apply to drivers under the age of 18, the dangers of teenage driving, and the responsibilities and liabilities of parents of teenage drivers,” Representative Miller said. “While the requirement may involve some short-term inconvenience, it will give parents the information they need to make sure their teenage children understand that driving a car is a privilege, not a right; and that reckless driving has serious consequences for teen drivers and parents alike.”

“The legislation also changes the hour when 16- and 17-year olds must be off the road from midnight to 11 p.m.,” Representative Miller said. “While some teenage drivers will not be pleased with the new driving curfew, most parents will welcome it, knowing their children will have to be home at a reasonable hour rather than being on the road at a time when the risk of accidents involving teenagers increases significantly.”

The legislation (House Bill 5748) also would impose tougher mandatory driver's license suspensions for 16- and 17-year olds who violate certain traffic laws, and extend the passenger restrictions that currently apply to 16- and 17-year-olds from the first six months after being licensed to a full year, Representative Miller said.