

House Republican Press Release

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**REP. SCRIBNER BILL WOULD ESTABLISH DRIVING
RESTRICTIONS FOR LEARNER'S PERMITS**



*New National Study Confirms Passenger Distractions A
Major Problem For Teen Drivers*

HARTFORD- State Representative David A. Scribner (R-Brookfield, Bethel) has introduced legislation that would add restrictions to learner's permits issued in Connecticut similar to the state's graduated driver's license limitations. House Bill 5288 is currently under consideration by the Legislature's Transportation Committee, on which Rep. Scribner serves as Ranking Member (House Republican Leader). He initiated Connecticut's graduated driver's license law, which first took effect in 2003.

Under current law, 16 and 17-year-old youths with learner's permits do not have a limit on the number of passengers they may have in a vehicle. They are only required to be accompanied by a licensed driver who is at least 20 years old. This is in direct contrast to newly-licensed drivers, who are subject to passenger restrictions for the first six months. For the first three months a 16 or 17 year old has a driver's license, they can only drive with a parent or other licensed driver, with only additional immediate family members allowed during the following three months.

According to a study released in February by State Farm Insurance Co. and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, a single teenage passenger with a teen driver doubles the risk of a fatal crash, while the risk is five times higher when two or more teens ride along. HB 5288 would effectively close a loophole for novice drivers that remains in state statutes, said Rep. Scribner.

"Graduated licensing laws were designed to limit distractions for teenagers and help them develop effective driving skills," said Rep. Scribner. "It makes sense to extend these laws to those who are just learning to drive. Authorities report that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of the death for 15 to 20 year olds. Restrictions such as this can help protect our youths and ensure safety on our roadways."

Rep. Scribner added that under the legislation, a teen who is receiving instruction from a certified driving instructor can still drive with fellow driver's education students in the car.

In addition to passenger restrictions, Connecticut's graduated licensing law prohibits a sixteen or seventeen-year old who has an operator's license from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the person is driving for work or a school activity, or out of medical necessity. Exemptions are made for ambulance, fire and EMS personnel who are 16 or 17 years of age.