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The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) released the results and recommendations of its research on school bus passenger crash protection on May 7, 2002. The report can be found at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa/announce/press/index.cfm>.

Details of the report are not known at this time. However, the results will be studied by the [National Association of Pupil Transportation](#) (NAPT) and the [National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services](#) (NASDPTS) to understand the impact this research will have on the pupil transportation industry. Parents and the public need to understand that:

- The school bus industry is about **SAFETY** and stands ready to do the right thing.
- **School buses are the safest form of transportation in America.**
- Fewer than 10 passengers are killed on school buses each year. (In the past year, six children died in school bus crashes as a result of catastrophic crash circumstances where lap and shoulder belts would probably not have made a difference.)
- It is more dangerous to walk to school than to ride a school bus.
- It's significantly more dangerous to drive children to school in passenger cars or light trucks than it is for them to ride a school bus.
- 600 to 800 children are killed each year during "normal school hours" that use some form of transportation other than school buses to get to and from school.
- Parents should understand that the school transportation industry is made up of thousands of professionals throughout the United States, and most are parents, too.
- Because the industry is transporting not only the public's children, they are also transporting their own and take issues such as these extremely seriously.
- **Currently, most states are experiencing tight financial situations.**
- Hopefully NHTSA's research and recommendations will offer definitive guidance and, therefore, help the industry make prudent decisions about future child passenger restraints based on sound scientific data.
- Student safety is an emotional issue. Public policy should not be based on emotions and speculation.
- **If science and data lead to a clear conclusion, the industry will be completely supportive.**
- The transportation industry has a long history of strong advocacy for measures that will definitively improve student safety.

The issue of whether to install lap belts in school buses has been debated for more than 25 years. The [NHTSA research report](#) is supposed to completely support the school transportation industry's position that lap belts are not needed in school buses.

However, the NHTSA report apparently discusses the fact that the lap/shoulder belt system performed very well in the crash tests, but that NHTSA has concerns about whether or not the lap/shoulder belts would be worn correctly in the real world.

At this time, we are unable to provide you with details of the NHTSA report. As mentioned, the report is available on the website listed above. A link to our Fact Sheet is below.

[Pupil Transportation Fact Sheet regarding Lap Belts on School Buses.](#)