S.B. No. 546 1-1 By: Menéndez (In the Senate - Filed December 6, 2024; February 3, 2025, read first time and referred to Committee on Transportation; April 14, 2025, reported adversely, with favorable Committee 1-2 1-3 1-4 1-5 Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 2; April 14, 2025, 1-6 sent to printer.) COMMITTEE VOTE 1-7

1-8		Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-9	Nichols	Х			
1-10	West	Χ			
1-11	Bettencourt		Х		
1-12	Hagenbuch		Х		
1-13	Hinojosa of Hidalgo	X			
1-14	Johnson	X			
1-15	King			X	
1-16	Miles	Χ			
1-17	Perry	X		•	

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 546 By: Hinojosa of Hidalgo 1-18

1-19 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED 1-20 AN ACT

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1-21 relating to seat belts on buses that transport children.

BÉ IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 547.701, Transportation Code, is amended by amending Subsection (e) and adding Subsections (f), (g), and (h) to read as follows:

- In this subsection, "bus" includes a school bus, school (e) activity multifunction school activity bus, bus, or Except as otherwise provided by school-chartered bus. subsection, a [A] bus operated by or contracted for use by a school district for the transportation of schoolchildren shall be equipped with a three-point seat belt for each passenger, including the operator. This subsection does not apply to:
- (1) a bus operated by or contracted for use [purchased district that is a model year 2017 or earlier; or

[(2) a bus purchased] by a school district [that model year 2018 or later] if the board of trustees for the school district[+

 $\left[\frac{A}{A}\right]$ determines that the district's budget does not permit the district to purchase a bus that is equipped with the seat belts required by this subsection; or

a bus for which the warranty would become void if (2) the bus were equipped to comply with this subsection[; and

[(B) votes to approve that determination meeting].

(f) The board of trustees of a school district that makes a determination under Subsection (e)(1) shall submit to the Texas Education Agency and present in a public meeting of the board a report that includes:

the number of buses operated by or contracted for (1)use by the district that:

(A)

are not equipped with seat belts; are equipped with two-point seat belts; and (B) (C) are equipped with three-point seat belts; and

the estimated cost to the district to equip with (2) three-point seat belts each bus operated by or contracted for use by the district that is not equipped with three-point seat belts as required by Subsection (e).

The Texas Education Agency shall:

1-59 (1) collect the information submitted under Subsection (f); 1-60

C.S.S.B. No. 546 (2) calculate the total amount of financial assistance 2-1 needed for all school districts to come into full compliance with 2-2 2-3 Subsection (e); and (3) summarize and make available to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and each member of the legislature the information described by 2-4 2**-**5 2**-**6 Subdivisions (1) and (2).

(h) A school district may accept gifts, grants, and donations from any public or private source to implement the 2-7 2-8 2-9 2**-**10 2**-**11 requirements of Subsection (e).

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding 547.701(e), Section Transportation Code, as amended by this Act, a school district is 2-12 not required to comply with that subsection before September 1, 2-13 2029. 2-14 2-15 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

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