

SENATE BILL 377  
By Dixon

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 15, Part 4, to create offenses involving leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 15, Part 4, is amended by adding the following new section:

Section 39-15-414.

(a) As used in this act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Collision" is the act of a motor vehicle coming into contact with an object or a person;

(2) "Injury" means physical harm to the body of a person, the causes of which may be, but is not limited to, heat, cold, and suffocation;

(3) "Motor Vehicle" means any automobile, truck, truck-tractor, or any motorbus or motor propelled vehicle not exclusively operated or driven on fixed rails or tracks; and

(4) "Unattended" means not accompanied by a person fourteen (14) years or older.

(b) A person commits the offense of leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle who knowingly leaves a child ten (10) years of age or less unattended in a motor vehicle.

(c) A person commits the offense of aggravated leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle who knowingly leaves a child ten (10) years of age or less unattended in a motor vehicle and as a result of such conduct:

(1) The child is injured; or

(2) The child injures another person by causing a motor vehicle collision or by causing the motor vehicle to injure a pedestrian.

(d) A person commits the offense of especially aggravated leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle who knowingly leaves a child ten (10) years of age or less unattended in a motor vehicle and as a result of such conduct:

(1) The child is fatally injured; or

(2) The child fatally injures another person by causing a motor vehicle collision or by causing the motor vehicle to fatally injure a pedestrian.

(e)

(1) A violation of subsection (b) is a Class C misdemeanor.

(2) A violation of subsection (c) is a Class E felony.

(3) A violation of subsection (d) is a Class C felony.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001, the public welfare requiring it.