

# General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** SB-186

AN ACT ALLOWING PERSONS SIXTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER TO

**Title:** OPERATE RIDES AT AMUSEMENT PARKS.

**Vote Date:** 3/23/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/18/2021

**File No.:** 314

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

General Law Committee

Co-sponsors of Bill

Sen. Eric C. Berthel, 32nd Dist.

Rep. David Rutigliano, 123<sup>rd</sup> Dist.

Rep. Anthony J. D'Amelio, 71<sup>st</sup> Dist.

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

This bill will change the age requirement of amusement park ride operators to 16 years or older. By changing the age to 16 years or older, it will help fill these jobs, as it is often difficult to fill part-time and seasonal ride operator jobs. There are 41 other states allowing 16-year-olds to operate amusement park rides and there is no data to suggest it impacts public safety.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None Expressed

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

### **Erik H. Beard, Managing Member & General Counsel, International Ride Training, LLC**

Mr. Beard supports this bill. It is not the age of the operator that makes a ride safe, it is a combination of design and maintenance, as well as training and level of accountability of facility management with regard to ride safety procedures. Ride operators are well trained. There is no correlation between the age of the operator and safety.

### **George Frantzis, co-owner, Quassy Amusement Park and Waterpark**

Mr. Frantzis supports this bill. Amusement park industry suggests there is no marked safety concerns in allowing 16-year-olds to operate amusement devices at stationary locations such

as amusement parks and family entertainment centers. More than 40 states either allow 16-year-old operators or have no set minimum.

**Larry Gorneault, General Manger, Lake Compounce Amusement Park**

Mr. Gorneault is in support of this bill. There is no documented data showing that having 16-year-olds operating amusement park rides is not safe. Ride operators at Lake Compounce have an intensive, safety-oriented focus to hiring training, certifying and supporting our staff regardless of age.

**Ed Hodgton, Secretary, New England's Entertainment Association**

Mr. Hodgton is in support of this bill. Lowering the minimum age to 16 will not impact ride safety and expands employment opportunities and alleviates the burden on attraction owners and operators. Regardless of age all operators receive the same training. The age limit being lowered to 16 is consistent with 41 other states.

**Steve Jones, Tolland, CT**

Mr. Jones supports this bill. It is reasonable and fair that we join 40 other states with allowing 16-year-olds to operate amusement park rides. It also will give them the opportunity for gainful employment.

**Erika Scheffer, Director, North America Advocacy, IAAPA**

Ms. Scheffer supports this bill. Lowering the age to 16 for ride operators will not affect the safety of the ride. Regardless of how old an operator is they receive the same training. It allows for attraction owners to hire 16-year-olds and to alleviate the hiring challenge.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None Expressed

**Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk**

**Date: 03/24/2021**