



March 27, 2017

Support for H.B. 2010 – Relating to providing workplace safety training information for use in the public school curriculum.

Dear Chairman Huberty and Vice Chair Bernal:

We, the undersigned organizations, representing over 44,000 occupational and environmental health and safety professionals nationally, including many members in Texas, are writing to express our strong support for House Bill 2010, as it would help address a critical need in the United States through a voluntary program without creating any mandates on our schools.

A serious problem exists in our country: teens are twice as likely as adults to be injured at work. This, combined with the fact that approximately 80% of teens work before or during their high school years, means that each year nearly 60,000 teens end up in the emergency room as a result of workplace injuries¹. These injuries are preventable through efforts that include student (employee) education on workplace safety and health. Your bill represents a positive step in this direction, and would help reduce these injuries by encouraging school districts to develop a workplace safety program that could be included in a public school's curriculum.

We share your concern about workplace safety for students. Rather than spend limited resources to create a new program, school districts may wish to use existing resources such as *Safety Matters*, a health and safety program developed by subject matter experts from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the American Industrial Hygiene Association® (AIHA). This voluntary program is 100% free, and no special training is needed to deliver it. Additional information on the *Safety Matters* program can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/safetymatters/>.

Our organizations support the approval of H.B. 2010 by the Public Education Committee and are happy to provide witness testimony. We hope to see the bill enacted into law before the State Legislature adjourns this year. We look forward to working with you to help protect the health and safety of students and—more broadly—all workers. As a general point of contact for all of the undersigned groups, please feel free to reach out to Mark Ames, AIHA's Director of Government Relations, at mames@aiha.org or (703) 846-0730.

Sincerely,
American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)
American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE)
Institute for Safety and Health Management (ISHM)
National Safety Council (NSC)

Cc:
Members of the Texas House Public Education Committee
Representative Greg Bonnen (R-24)

¹ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health: "Safety Matters," <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/safetymatters/>.