

SENATE DISCUSSING BILL TO HELP KEEP KIDS SAFE BY REQUIRING AN ANTIFREEZE BITTERING AGENT



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Columbus — Senator Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton) co-sponsored legislation recently, to require that engine coolant and antifreeze contain a bittering agent to help keep children safe.

Recognizing the week of April 25th as *Safe Kids Week*, Senator Oelslager emphasizes the need for good legislation to protect Ohio's kids. Senate Bill 140 has been a collaborative effort spanning several General Assemblies and Senator Oelslager is optimistic this bipartisan bill will have a positive impact.

"I believe this legislation will reduce the number of incidents due to ingestion of engine coolant and antifreeze," Oelslager said. "Its impact should prevent injury to children and pets."

The provisions of the bill address the troubling statistic that an estimated 10,000 pets and 5,000 children ingest antifreeze annually. Antifreeze is brightly colored and has a sweet, gummy taste that is especially attractive to children. The addition of a bittering agent, denatonium benzoate, to antifreeze and coolant would make the substances unpalatable. Denatonium has been in use for nearly 50 years to "bitter" products such as household cleaners, crayons, bubble bath, and nail polish to prevent ingestion.

At a cost of just two to three cents per five dollar gallon of product, the required addition of denatonium benzoate to consumer-packaged antifreeze will save thousands of animal lives and prevent hundreds of children from being sent to emergency rooms each year.

More than a dozen states – including California, Illinois, New Jersey, Virginia, and Wisconsin – have already passed antifreeze bittering laws, and now Ohio is looking to join them. Senate Bill 140 is widely supported by The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association of Poison Control Centers, the American Veterinary Medical Association, among other national organizations.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact my office if you have questions or concerns about any state-related matter. You can reach my office by phone at (614) 466-0626, by e-mail at SD29@senate.state.oh.us or by writing State Senator Scott Oelslager, Ohio Statehouse, 1 Capitol Square, Columbus, OH 43215.

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State Senator Scott Oelslager represents the 29th District for the Ohio Senate, which includes portions of Stark County. His office can be reached at (614) 466-0626 or at sd29@senate.state.oh.us.