1 A bill to be entitled 2 An act relating to child safety in motor vehicles; 3 providing a short title; creating s. 316.2226, F.S.; 4 defining the term "motor vehicle"; requiring a person 5 who uses a motor vehicle to transport children of a 6 certain age to equip such motor vehicle with an alarm 7 system that prompts the driver to inspect the motor 8 vehicle for unattended occupants before exiting; 9 providing penalties; requiring the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to initiate a public 10 11 awareness campaign regarding such alarm systems; 12 requiring the department to adopt by rule minimum 13 safety standards for such systems and to maintain a list of approved alarm manufacturers and alarm 14 15 systems; amending s. 402.305, F.S.; revising 16 transportation safety minimum standards for the 17 licensure of child care facilities; providing an 18 effective date. 19 20 WHEREAS, the leaving of children unattended in vehicles and 21 the independent access of unoccupied vehicles by children are 22 significant public health and safety problems, and 23 WHEREAS, millions of children are transported every day in

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inadvertently left inside vehicles, which may result in their

the back seats of vehicles and are at risk of being

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deaths or serious injuries as the result of heat stroke, and WHEREAS, Kids and Car Safety reports that, between 1990 and 2022, at least 8,000 children were left alone in hot cars or independently gained access to unoccupied cars, with more than 990 of those children dying of heat stroke and more than 1,200 of them becoming seriously injured, and

WHEREAS, despite widespread education programs and public awareness initiatives over the past 30 years, the number of hot car deaths among children has continued to rise, and

WHEREAS, inexpensive technology is currently available to detect and alert drivers to the presence of an unattended occupant in a vehicle, NOW, THEREFORE,

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Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Jace Lucas Leslie Act."

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Section 2. Section 316.2226, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

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316.2226 Unattended occupant alarm system required.-

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(1) As used in this section, the term "motor vehicle"

means a motor vehicle as defined in s. 316.003 which is operated
on the roadways, streets, and highways of this state. The term
does not include:

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(a) A bus used for the transportation of persons for

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| 51  | compensation.  |
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| 52  | (b) A farm tractor or implement of husbandry.                    |
| 53  | (c) A truck having a gross vehicle weight rating of more         |
| 54  | than 26,000 pounds.  |
| 55  | (d) A motorcycle, a moped, a bicycle, or an electric             |
| 56  | bicycle.   |
| 57  | (2) By October 1, 2024, a person who uses a motor vehicle        |
| 58  | to transport one or more children 6 years of age or younger must |
| 59  | equip such motor vehicle with an alarm system approved by the    |
| 60  | department which prompts the driver to inspect the motor vehicle |
| 51  | for unattended occupants before exiting the motor vehicle.       |
| 52  | (3) A violation of this section is a noncriminal traffic         |
| 63  | infraction, punishable as a moving violation as provided in      |
| 54  | chapter 318.   |
| 65  | (4) By September 1, 2024, the department shall initiate a        |
| 66  | public awareness campaign to educate individuals regarding the   |
| 57  | alarm system required under subsection (2).                      |
| 68  | (5) The department shall adopt by rule minimum safety            |
| 59  | standards for such systems and shall maintain a list of approved |
| 70  | alarm manufacturers and alarm systems that meet or exceed those  |
| 71  | standards.   |
| 72  | Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (10) of section           |
| 73  | 402.305, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:                   |
| 7 4 | 402.305 Licensing standards: child care facilities               |

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TRANSPORTATION SAFETY.-

(10)

(a) Minimum standards  $\underline{\text{must}}$   $\underline{\text{shall}}$  include all of the following:

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- 1. Requirements for child restraints or seat belts in vehicles used by child care facilities and large family child care homes to transport children.
  - 2. Requirements for annual inspections of such vehicles.
- 3. Limitations on the number of children  $\underline{\text{who}}$  that may be transported in such vehicles.
- 4. Procedures to ensure that children are not inadvertently left in vehicles when transported by the facility or home and that systems are in place to ensure accountability for children transported by such facilities and homes.
- 5. Procedures for notification of a child's emergency contact if the child does not arrive at the scheduled time and the facility or family day care home has not received an advanced notification of the child's absence.
  - Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.