



Pickerington School District
Certified Director of Pupil Transportation
Gregory A. Kelley

House Bill 83 Proponent Testimony
May 19, 2020

My name is Greg Kelley with the Pickerington Local School District. I am offering written testimony today to provide support of House Bill 83.

As someone who has worked in pupil transportation since 2002, and been actively working on the problem of illegal passing of school buses since 2013, I am encouraged by the effort of Representative Brown to advance our ability to gather the required information listed in ORC 4511.751;

“The operator shall report the license plate number and a general description of the vehicle and of the operator of the vehicle.”

Bus Drivers main focus at the drop-off and pickup location is on the children and procedure is specifically provided by 3301-83-13 (b) (6):

“Each pupil shall be assigned a designated place of safety on the residence side of the roadway on which the vehicle is scheduled to stop. Driver must account for each pupil at designated place of safety before leaving. Pupils are not to proceed to their residence until the school bus has departed.”

This procedure is reversed for pickup as each driver is required to count the number of students at the stop and then count each student again as they board to make sure everyone is accounted for.

This understandably limits a bus driver’s ability to gather the required information listed in 4511.751. Initially transportation staff were required to complete a form provided to us by law enforcement. In 2013 my department completed a count in a 15 school day period of 88 illegal passing events. Less than 20% could provide the complete information required to hold the motorist accountable. We identified several of our buses that experienced the highest violations whose route were mainly in the jurisdiction of the city. We then had them equipped with “stop arm cameras”. The first year of existence enabled us to hold accountable 140 motorists who put children in danger. We also equipped other buses who traveled outside the jurisdiction for video capture but experienced the inability to get a good view of the operator. Other factors were adverse conditions such as low light, heavy rainfall, etc. That being said they were very useful in documenting the number of events, location, time of day, general vehicle

description, and plate numbers. In addition a driver only had to focus on the description of the driver as the camera would capture the other legal information required.

In Pickerington we currently have been submitting video evidence to corroborate the illegal passing events to the State Highway Patrol on a limited scale.

I am in favor the HB 83 for more clearly defining the role of stop arm video capture, better informing the public of the law, and providing districts financial support in the effort to keep our children safe. I have spoken with other transportation professionals and they are also encouraged by the added enforcement provisions and clarity for motorists who strike a student.