

James Mahlman Testimony

October 2, 2019

Good Morning. My name is James Mahlman and this is my mother Katie Mahlman. I am nine years old and in the fourth grade at St. Louis School in Custar. I ride a bus to and from school every day. I get on and off at my Grandma and Grandpa Wilhelm's house. My grandparents live on State Route 235 and I have to cross the road to get on the bus. I know it is safe to cross the road when my bus driver, Teri, gives me a hand signal to let me know it's ok. I also, look both ways before I step on to the road and when I'm on the road.

On Monday, September, 23rd at 7:55 a.m. of this year, I was standing in my grandma and grandpas driveway waiting for the bus. I saw the bus driver put her lights on before stopping in front of the house. I saw Teri put her hand up and I approached the edge of the road. I thought she was telling me to come forward. Before I went to cross, I looked both ways. I had seen the vehicle coming down the road before I approached and then I saw it was not stopping. It was not going fast, but it did not slow down either. I stepped back away from the road. If I did not step back, I would have been close enough to touch the vehicle. The vehicle was a truck hauling a trailer with equipment on it. A second truck following did stop. Once this truck was stopped, I looked up at Teri and was able to cross the road and get on the bus.

The only thing I thought at the time was "I better step back, he isn't stopping." I was not scared and I'm not scared now. I trust my bus driver to get me on safely.

I know my grandma was mad the whole day, and I know she was looking for the driver. I know my grandma was upset because I could have been hit by the truck and she watched it all. I know my parents are upset too. We do not know who the driver is but I think he or she should be punished; the driver broke the law.

I think the State of Ohio should have tough laws against people who don't stop for busses and I think busses should have cameras so you can see license plates of those that drive past or around busses. I also think that it's a good idea to have August as "School Bus Safety Awareness" month so drivers will be more aware when they are around school busses and kids.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story.