

Jeff Vrabel, Sr.
Testimony on Senate Bill 134
Change law regarding passing school bus
Wednesday, January 22, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m.
South Hearing Room

Chairman McColley, Vice-Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee, my name is Jeff Vrabel, Sr. I am a two-time Past President of the Ohio Association for Pupil Transportation and a former member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services or NASDPTS. I have served on various state and national boards throughout my more than twenty-three-year career as a pupil transportation administrator.

Every year, NASDPTS requests each state choose a single day between March 1 to May 31 for school bus operators, both public and contracted, to observe and report any instances of motorists illegally passing their school buses. Drivers are provided with a form on which to report these violations.

During this reporting period in 2019, 130,963 school bus drivers participated nationally, with a staggering 95,319 illegal passings reported. Let me tell you that number again; on 95,319 occasions, a school bus was passed while loading or unloading students with its stop arm extended and red stop lights activated.

On March 20, 2019 Ohio conducted its survey, where 4,145 drivers participated, reporting 1,502 illegal passings. This number relates to the potential of 1,502 accidents where children could get injured or killed. This number relates to how many motorists blatantly disregarded the Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.75(A) and passed a stopped school bus. This number represents the MINIMUM number of children who could have been killed by the actions of these 1,502 who failed to stop for the stop arm and red stop lights. Locally, the South-Western City School District in Grove City, Ohio reported 122 illegal passings on the reporting date. This is the school district where my children go to school. I would hate to have to tell them that one of their friends died

because one of the 122 violators did not stop when the bus had its red lights on, and their friend got hit at the bus stop.

I would also like to take a little time to talk about the reporting procedure. There are two specific laws that address stopped school buses and the reporting of violations.

Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.75 (A) states *“(A) The driver of a vehicle, streetcar, or trackless trolley upon meeting or overtaking from either direction any school bus stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging any school child, person attending programs offered by community boards of mental health and county boards of developmental disabilities, or child attending a program offered by a head start agency, shall stop at least ten feet from the front or rear of the school bus and shall not proceed until such school bus resumes motion, or until signaled by the school bus driver to proceed.”*

Ohio Revised Code Section 4511.751 reads: **Sec. 4511.751** *As used in this section, "license plate" includes, but is not limited to, any temporary license placard issued under section 4503.182 of the Revised Code or similar law of another jurisdiction.*

When the operator of a school bus believes that a motorist has violated division (A) of section 4511.75 of the Revised Code, the operator shall report the license plate number and a general description of the vehicle and of the operator of the vehicle to the law enforcement agency exercising jurisdiction over the area where the alleged violation occurred. The information contained in the report relating to the license plate number and to the general description of the vehicle and the operator of the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation may be supplied by any person with first-hand knowledge of the information. Information of which the operator of the school bus has first-hand knowledge also may be corroborated by any other person, or an image, images, or video provided by a camera installed pursuant to section 4511.76 of the Revised Code.

With this in mind, we need to make sure that our school bus drivers have all the tools necessary to report violations. The front license plate is the first place a school bus driver will look to make these reports, and it is vital that we keep the front license plate on motor vehicles to help catch the motorists who violate Ohio's laws. By

removing the front license plate from motor vehicles in Ohio, not only will school bus drivers be at a severe disadvantage, but I believe law enforcement will as well.

I ask for your support of Senate Bill 179, and to retain and continue the current law requiring the display of two license plates for most motor vehicles.

While school buses remain incredibly safe, we all know that students are most vulnerable when they are outside the school bus in the “Danger Zone;” the ten-foot area around the school bus. 1,502 illegal passings on a single day is unacceptable. Drivers who disregard the stop arm and stop lights on a stop light must be held accountable. We must ensure that our children are safe while at the bus stop and while entering and exiting the school bus. The passage of Senate Bill 134 will greatly help this effort.

Jeff Vrabel, Sr.
Past President
Ohio Association
for Pupil Transportation
2013-2014 and 2015-2016
vrabel.jeff@gmail.com
www.zebratransportation.com





2019 Survey on Illegal Passing of School Buses--Summary Results

| Name of Person Reporting | State | Primary Survey Date | Number of Participating Bus Drivers | Illegal Passes Observed | | | Passed From | | Passed On | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| | | | | AM | Mid-day | PM | Front | Rear | Left | Right |
| Chad Carpenter | AL | 04/10/19 | 6,948 | 712 | | 893 | 1,316 | 289 | 1,573 | 32 |
| Jerry Owens | AR | 04/24/19 | 3,896 | 390 | 0 | 494 | 711 | 173 | 872 | 12 |
| Anna Borges | CA | 05/08/19 | 4,867 | 11,878 | 1,917 | 12,360 | 11,772 | 14,383 | 26,155 | 0 |
| Local Results | CO | Various | 1,273 | 298 | 19 | 258 | 392 | 183 | 559 | 17 |
| Tyler Bryan | DE | 05/10/19 | 1,100 | 329 | 10 | 319 | 320 | 327 | 645 | 13 |
| Local Results | FL | Various | 10,158 | 6,555 | 945 | 6,140 | 6,645 | 5,533 | 11,319 | 526 |
| Pat Schofill | GA | 04/24/19 | 13,754 | 4,106 | 85 | 4,636 | 5,932 | 2,895 | 8,690 | 137 |
| James Kauhi | HI | 04/24/19 | 549 | 376 | 0 | 323 | 494 | 205 | 671 | 28 |
| Max Christensen | IA | 05/01/19 | 1,796 | 79 | 14 | 84 | 125 | 52 | 170 | 7 |
| Local Results | IL | 05/01/19 | 6,756 | 1,694 | 216 | 1,451 | 1,824 | 1,409 | 2,966 | 217 |
| Michael A. LaRocco | IN | 04/23/19 | 6,863 | 1,241 | 94 | 1,318 | 2,144 | 509 | 2,549 | 104 |
| Keith Dreiling | KS | 04/17/19 | 3,300 | 410 | 86 | 544 | 758 | 282 | 1,021 | 19 |
| Elisa Hanley | KY | 04/24/19 | 2,848 | 146 | 19 | 310 | 329 | 146 | 467 | 8 |
| Local Results | LA | Various | 1,352 | 342 | 9 | 481 | 478 | 312 | 732 | 41 |
| Gabriel Rose | MD | 04/24/19 | 9,187 | 3,074 | 274 | 3,040 | 2,270 | 924 | 3,074 | 120 |
| Local Results | ME | Various | 445 | 62 | 5 | 106 | 136 | 36 | 167 | 4 |
| Local Results | MI | 05/08/19 | 1,373 | 194 | 19 | 295 | 365 | 120 | 494 | 18 |
| Brian Reu | MN | 04/17/19 | 2,360 | 277 | 7 | 341 | 513 | 112 | 617 | 8 |
| Local Results | MO | 04/10/19 | 3,294 | 401 | 38 | 405 | 496 | 268 | 749 | 26 |
| Janice M. Grant | MS | 04/23/19 | 1,251 | 98 | 3 | 142 | 182 | 60 | 237 | 5 |
| Donell Rosenthal | MT | 05/23/19 | 388 | 37 | 0 | 53 | 77 | 13 | 85 | 5 |
| Kevin Harrison | NC | 04/03/19 | 12,705 | 1,400 | 56 | 1,736 | 2,247 | 945 | 3,136 | 56 |
| Don Williams | ND | 04/17/19 | 210 | 10 | 0 | 17 | 26 | 1 | 27 | 0 |
| Local Results | NE | 04/11/19 | 338 | 47 | 23 | 63 | 66 | 59 | 102 | 3 |
| Local Results | NJ | 05/21/19 | 1,394 | 374 | 43 | 376 | 563 | 163 | 634 | 34 |
| Diana Hollander | NV | 05/22/19 | 953 | 591 | 79 | 702 | 801 | 571 | 1,364 | 8 |
| Local Results | NY | 05/01/19 | 1,326 | 355 | 13 | 482 | 524 | 284 | 723 | 18 |
| Pete Japikse | OH | 03/20/19 | 4,145 | 682 | 45 | 775 | 1,091 | 411 | 1,471 | 31 |
| Tina Spence | OK | 04/01/19 | N/A | 180 | 9 | 230 | 308 | 111 | 416 | 3 |
| Brock Dittus | OR | 04/16/19 | 1,822 | 637 | 33 | 701 | 1,153 | 183 | 1,302 | 26 |
| Richard Podmore | SC | 05/22/19 | 1,227 | 105 | 5 | 113 | 156 | 70 | 216 | 8 |
| Dr. Tammy P. Knipp | TN | 04/26/19 | 2,104 | 837 | 35 | 1,061 | 1,593 | 340 | 1,850 | 83 |
| Christie Hebert | TX | 04/24/19 | 10,100 | 4,259 | 308 | 5,036 | 6,289 | 3,314 | 9,285 | 318 |
| Ron Litchfield | UT | 03/25/19 | 1,661 | 404 | 52 | 461 | 646 | 268 | 892 | 18 |
| Patrick McManamon | VT | 05/08/19 | 143 | 8 | 3 | 16 | 21 | 6 | 27 | 0 |
| Patti Enbody | WA | 05/01/19 | 4,233 | 779 | 39 | 847 | 893 | 760 | 1,628 | 29 |
| Local Results | WI | 05/08/19 | 1,820 | 153 | 8 | 299 | 260 | 84 | 347 | 4 |
| Sherry Sadler | WV | 05/01/19 | 1,963 | 94 | 7 | 164 | 231 | 34 | 254 | 11 |
| Justin Budd | WY | 02/06/19 | 1,061 | 54 | 5 | 56 | | | | |
| TOTALS | 39 States | | 130,963 | 43,668 | 4,523 | 47,128 | 54,147 | 35,835 | 87,486 | 1,997 |
| | | | | 45.81% | 4.75% | 49.44% | 60.18% | 39.82% | 97.77% | 2.23% |

July 24, 2019

95,319

For complete information visit <http://www.nasdpts.org/StopArm/index.html>.