



Senate Judiciary Committee
Senate Bill 62 Proponent Testimony
Buckeye Association of School Administrators

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill (SB) 62. My name is Paul Imhoff with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators, which represents Ohio's public school superintendents. I also had the pleasure of serving on the Ohio School Bus Safety Task Force as an appointee of Governor Mike DeWine.

On any given day, hundreds of thousands of Ohio students travel nearly 1 million miles on more than 14,000 yellow school buses. Along those journeys, thousands of motorists illegally pass school buses while loading or unloading children. In 2021, the Ohio Department of Public Safety reported more than 14,000 citations were issued over a four-year period for illegally passing school buses, equating to roughly 3,500 per year. But a 2019 survey of school bus drivers conducted by the Ohio School Boards Association reveals the magnitude of these offenses may be much larger than the citations issued: nearly one-third of Ohio school bus drivers reported that more than 1,500 school buses were illegally passed on just one school day, according to the survey. Clearly, these dangerous incidents are placing children's lives at risk, and SB 62 would make positive steps forward to enhance school bus safety and mitigate these unnecessary and dangerous occurrences.

SB 62 would make the following essential enhancements for student safety:

- enhance and create new financial and driver license-related penalties for failing to stop for a school bus;
- clarify that cameras may be installed on school buses in order to capture an image and or video of a person improperly passing a school bus, allowing those recordings to be used as evidence in a criminal case;
- create the School Bus Safety Fund and Grant Program, under which schools can apply for funding to improve the safety features on their school buses; and
- designate August as "School Bus Safety Awareness Month" to increase public awareness of this critical safety issue.

Our members appreciate Senator Gavarone for introducing this legislation that will have a

positive impact on student safety through enhanced enforcement, increased equipment capabilities, and additional education for motorists. We urge you to support SB 62, which will improve the safety of Ohio students during their journeys to and from school.

Chairman Manning and members of the committee, thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions for me, please contact me at the information below.

Sincerely,

Paul Imhoff, director of governmental relations, Buckeye Association of School Administrators

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