

James Mahlman Testimony

February, 6th 2021

Hello, my name is James Mahlman, I am ten years old and in the fifth 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 used to have to cross the road to get on the bus. I knew it was safe to cross the road when my bus driver, Teri, gave me a hand signal to let me know it was ok. I also, looked both ways before I stepped on to the road and when I was on the road.

On Monday, September, 23rd, 2019 at 7:55 a.m., 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 then and I'm not scared now. I trusted my bus driver to get me on safely.

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

Since that day my mom was able to make some changes. She contacted the bus garage and asked if the route could be changed so my brother and I, and others that ride our bus, don't have to cross the busy roads anymore. My brother and I no longer have to cross the road.

I think the State of Ohio should have tough laws against people who don't stop for buses and I think buses should have cameras so you can see license plates

of those that drive past or around them. 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 buses and kids.

Thank you for taking the time to read about my story.