



**National Association
of State Directors
of Pupil Transportation Services**

Press Release

Increased State Survey Participation Shows Illegal Passing Still Prevalent

July 21, 2016

Baltimore, Maryland- Today, the national association representing state directors of pupil transportation released the results of its 6th annual survey on illegal passing of school buses. In a record 33 states throughout the country, plus the District of Columbia, almost 20 percent of the nation's school bus drivers participated in a one-day survey to report how many times motorists passed their stopped school buses illegally. Over 96,000 school bus drivers reported that 74,421 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day. Throughout a 180-day school year, these sample results point to more than 13 million violations among America's motoring public.

"We know that students are far safer in school buses, but when they are outside the bus, they are more vulnerable to injury or death," said Leon Langley, president of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS). "This survey captured only a fraction of the violations that bus drivers and traffic officers know all too well are occurring each and every day throughout the United States. It verifies that, unfortunately, motorists continue to pass school buses at an alarming rate." Added Langley, "Any driver who passes a stopped school bus illegally is endangering children and is subject to significant fines and possibly other penalties. The survey results demonstrate the importance of redoubling our efforts to educate the motoring public about the potentially tragic consequences of violating school bus stopping laws."

NASDPTS first coordinated the annual survey in 2011, and the results have been unfortunately consistent. In 2011, 76,685 illegal passes were documented during the one-day survey. In 2012, 88,025 illegal passes were reported. There were 85,279 in 2013, 75,966 in 2014, and 78,518 in 2015. The surveys have brought attention to the issue, and several states have adopted more stringent safety countermeasures, such as improved motorist education, increased fines, and more law enforcement, including increasing use of photo and video evidence from cameras mounted on the sides of school buses.

Reducing illegal passing and ensuring children the safest possible trip to and from school requires a comprehensive approach, involving education of students, motorists, and school bus drivers, frequent, visible enforcement, and advances in school bus equipment and other technologies. NASDPTS supports state and local laws and campaigns to remind the driving public to put away their phones and avoid distractions while driving. Everyone's full attention must be devoted to the task of driving safely, and particular caution must be exercised in the vicinity of school buses and students.

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services encourages state directors, local school districts, law enforcement agencies, legislators, and America's motoring public to continue efforts and reduce the ongoing threat to the safety of students posed by distracted driving and illegal passing.

Complete information on the project, including the detailed 2016 survey results, can be found at www.nasdpts.org/stoparm or by contacting North Carolina's State Director, Derek Graham (Derek.Graham@dpi.nc.gov), or NASDPTS Executive Director, Charlie Hood (ExecDir@nasdpts.org).

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