



National Association
of State Directors
of Pupil Transportation Services

Press Release

Illegal Passing of School Buses Remains Significant National Problem

August 4, 2017 (*revised 8/24/17 to include late WV results*)

Las Vegas, Nevada- Today, the national association representing state directors of pupil transportation released the results of its 7th annual survey on illegal passing of school buses. In 30 states throughout the country, plus the District of Columbia, over 20 percent of the nation's school bus drivers participated in a one-day survey to report motorists who passed their stopped school buses illegally. Almost 107,000 school bus drivers reported that 78,239 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day during the 2016-17 school year. Throughout a 180-day school year, these sample results point to more than 14 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 Diana Hollander, 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 at an alarming rate throughout the United States." Added Hollander, "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 has coordinated the annual survey since 2011. Although the results have been unfortunately consistent, they have brought needed attention among state and federal policy makers to the need for greater safety countermeasures. Several states, including Florida, Minnesota, North Carolina, and others have recently increased penalties for violations, authorized the use of photo evidence for issuing citations, or enacted other measures designed to deter this dangerous practice.

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 avoid distractions while driving and to pay special attention around school buses. In December 2016, NASDPTS partnered with the National Association for Pupil Transportation and the National School Transportation Association in securing a commitment from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to develop a nationwide awareness campaign to combat the problem.

As the new school year starts up throughout the country, 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 to reduce the ongoing threat to the safety of students posed by distracted driving and illegal passing of school buses.

Complete information on the project, including the detailed 2017 survey results, can be found at www.nasdpts.org/stoparm or by contacting NASDPTS Executive Director, Charlie Hood (ExecDir@nasdpts.org).

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www.nasdpts.org