



NEW HAMPSHIRE SENATE

NEWS RELEASE

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Senate Passes School Bus Safety Act

Concord, NH: Senators Denise Ricciardi (R-Bedford) and Bill Gannon (R-Sandown) released a joint statement after the passage of the School Bus Safety Act:

Senator Ricciardi said, “New Hampshire is taking decisive action to protect its most precious responsibility: its children. I want to thank our House colleagues for bringing these ideas forward as we work to make the trip to school safer.”

Senator Gannon added, “Together, this package strengthens school bus safety and upholds high standards for those transporting students. It also tackles the urgent driver shortage and removes barriers by recognizing out-of-state credentials, helping qualified drivers get on the road faster without compromising safety.”

Senator Ricciardi concluded: “We are here to help Granite State families. Passing a stopped school bus puts children in danger, and we need all New Hampshire drivers to respect the law on the morning and afternoon drive.”

Background:

The School Bus Safety Act includes HB 1051, HB 1308-FN, HB 1537-L, and HB 1758.

HB 1758 authorizes the Division of Motor Vehicles to certify school bus drivers with a valid credential in states with similar safety and training requirements. The bill as introduced would have only applied to Vermont, but the Senate amendment would allow bus drivers from any state to work in New Hampshire if they meet the Granite State’s standards.

HB 1051 strengthens criminal background check requirements for school bus drivers, streamlining the fingerprinting procedure to reduce errors and time needed to certify qualified school bus drivers.

HB 1308-FN makes it a misdemeanor to pass a stopped school bus with an initial fine of \$300 and a 7-day license suspension.

HB 1537-L authorizes the use of high-resolution cameras to identify drivers who pass a stopped school bus.

Ricciardi chairs the Senate Transportation Committee, which considered HB 1537-L and HB 1758.

Gannon chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, which considered HB 1051 and HB 1308.

The Senate unanimously approved all four bills in the School Bus Safety Act today.

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