



Press Release

Fifth Annual Survey Verifies Motorists Continue to Pass Stopped School Buses

September 14, 2015

Baltimore, Maryland- Today, the national association representing state directors of pupil transportation released the results of its 5th annual survey on illegal passing of school buses. In 26 states throughout the country, 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 102,000 school bus drivers reported that 78,518 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day. Throughout a 180-day school year, these sample results point to more than 14 million violations by a portion of 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. "There are nearly a half million school buses on the road each day in the United States. 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." Added Langley, "Any driver who passes a stopped school bus illegally is endangering children and possibly even his or her own future. Trying to save a few seconds by passing a school bus and hitting a child can be devastating not only for the victims and their families, but also for the motorist who will have to live with the sad consequences."

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 and 75,966 in 2014. The surveys have helped bring attention to the issue, and some 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.

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 their efforts to solve this ongoing threat to the safety of students.

Complete information on the project, including the detailed 2015 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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