



Press Release

Annual NASDPTS Survey Highlights Danger of Passing School Buses

August 21, 2018

Las Vegas, Nevada- Today, the national association representing state directors of pupil transportation released the results of its 8th annual survey on illegal passing of school buses. In 38 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. In the survey, 108,623 school bus drivers reported that 83,944 vehicles passed their buses illegally on a single day during the 2017-18 school year. Throughout a 180-day school year, these sample results point to more than 15 million violations among America's motoring public. The number of incidents is likely far greater, since not all school bus drivers participated in the voluntary survey.

"We know that students are far safer in school buses, but cars passing school buses is one of the most troubling problems we face, because it is so common and can lead to injury or death," said Diana Hollander, president of the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS). "This survey provides a shocking snapshot of the violations that bus drivers and traffic officers know all too well are occurring each and every day throughout the United States," added Hollander. "Any driver who passes a stopped school bus while students are getting on or off is gambling with children's lives. Violating your state's law can result in significant fines or even more serious penalties. The goal of this survey is to educate the motoring public and open their eyes about the potentially tragic consequences of violating school bus stopping laws."

The results of the surveys, conducted annually since 2011, have been unfortunately consistent. The numbers, however, have brought needed attention among state and federal policy makers to the need for greater safety countermeasures. In recent years, several states have 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.

As the new school year ramps 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 redouble their 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 results from the 2018 survey and prior years, 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