

39:3B-12

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST
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(School buses-- exit requirements)

NJSA: 39:3B-12

LAWS OF: 1992 CHAPTER: 93

BILL NO: S356

SPONSOR(S) Bassano

DATE INTRODUCED: February 13, 1992

COMMITTEE: ASSEMBLY: Judiciary

SENATE: Education

AMENDED DURING PASSAGE: Yes

DATE OF PASSAGE: ASSEMBLY: June 29, 1992

SENATE: May 7, 1992

DATE OF APPROVAL: September 8, 1992

FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE ATTACHED IF AVAILABLE:

SPONSOR STATEMENT: Yes

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: ASSEMBLY: Yes

SENATE: Yes

FISCAL NOTE:

VETO MESSAGE: Yes

MESSAGE ON SIGNING: Yes

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: Yes

Hearing on
974.90 New Jersey. Legislature. Assembly Education Committee.
E24 Public hearing on A735...held 11-6-86. Trenton, 1986.
1986z/a

KBG:pp

[FIRST REPRINT]

SENATE, No. 356

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 1992

By Senator BASSANO

1 AN ACT concerning school bus safety standards and
2 supplementing Title 39 of the Revised Statute.

3

4 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
5 *State of New Jersey:*

6 1. A type I school bus when used to transport children to and
7 from school, or to and from school-related activities, shall be
8 equipped with emergency exits to conform with emergency
9 evacuation standards to be prescribed by rule or regulation of the
10 State Board of Education. The emergency exits shall at a
11 minimum consist of a rear emergency door and ¹[a] two¹ roof
12 ¹[hatch] hatches¹.

13 2. This act shall take effect immediately and be applicable to
14 type I buses manufactured on or after July 1, next following
15 enactment.

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20 Establishes minimum emergency exit requirements, including
21 two roof hatches, in all type I school buses.

EXPLANATION--Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the
above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Assembly AJL committee amendments adopted June 15, 1992.

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10 State Board of Education. The emergency exits shall at a
11 minimum consist of a rear emergency door and a roof hatch.

12 2. This act shall take effect immediately and be applicable to
13 type I buses manufactured on or after July 1, next following
14 enactment.

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17 **STATEMENT**

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19 This bill requires emergency exits on all type I school buses
20 used to transport school children to or from school, or to or from
21 school related activities. These emergency exits shall conform
22 with emergency evacuation standards to be prescribed by rule or
23 regulation of the State Board of Education. At a minimum the
24 emergency exits shall consist of a rear emergency door and a roof
25 hatch. Since type I school buses currently have a rear emergency
26 exit, the practical effect of this legislation would be to require
27 type I school buses manufactured on or after July 1 next
28 following enactment to be equipped with a roof hatch to
29 facilitate emergency evacuation.

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34 Establishes minimum emergency exit requirements, including a
35 roof hatch, in all type I school buses.

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY, LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 356

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 1992

The Assembly Judiciary, Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 356.

This bill requires emergency exits on all type I school buses used to transport school children to or from school, or to or from school-related activities. The emergency exits shall conform with emergency evacuation standards to be prescribed by rule or regulation of the State Board of Education. The bill provided that at a minimum the emergency exits shall consist of a rear emergency door and a roof hatch. The committee amended the bill to require that emergency exits consist of a rear emergency door and two roof hatches instead of only one roof hatch.

Since type I school buses currently have a rear emergency exit, the practical effect of this legislation would be to require type I school buses manufactured on or after July 1 next following enactment to be equipped with two roof hatches to facilitate emergency evacuation.

"Type 1" school vehicles are defined in N.J.S.A.39:1-1 as any vehicle with a seating capacity of 17 or more, used to transport enrolled children to or from a school, school connected activity, day camp, summer day camp, nursery school child care center, preschool center or other similar places of education.

This bill is identical to Assembly Bill No. 1494(1R).

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 356

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 19, 1992

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports this bill without committee amendments.

This bill requires emergency exits on all type I school buses used to transport school children to or from school, or to or from school-related activities. The emergency exits shall conform with emergency evacuation standards to be prescribed by rule or regulation of the State Board of Education. At a minimum the emergency exits shall consist of a rear emergency door and a roof hatch. Since type I school buses currently have a rear emergency exit, the practical effect of this legislation would be to require type I school buses manufactured on or after July 1 next following enactment to be equipped with a roof hatch to facilitate emergency evacuation.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE TO

[FIRST REPRINT]

SENATE, No. 356

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: July 31, 1992

Senate Bill No. 356 [1R] of 1992 requires emergency exits on all type I school buses used to transport school children to or from school, or to or from school related activities. At a minimum the emergency exits shall consist of a rear emergency door and two roof hatches. Since type I school buses currently have a rear emergency exit, the practical effect of this legislation would be to require type I school buses manufactured on or after July 1 next following enactment to be equipped with two roof hatches.

The Department of Education did not provide a fiscal estimate of this bill.

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that this bill would increase expenditures by local school districts by \$630,000 in the first year, \$661,500 in the second year, and \$694,580 in the third year.

This estimate assumes that 900 new type I school buses are purchased annually and the cost of adding one emergency escape roof hatch is approximately \$350 per bus, according to industry estimates. The inflation rate is a constant 5 percent annually.

This bill would have no fiscal impact on the State unless and until the transportation aid formula constants are adjusted. This would not occur until 1992, and districts would not realize the effects of that adjustment until the 1993-94 school year. The impact of any adjustments to the transportation aid constants on State expenditures cannot be estimated at this time because it is unknown to what extent these constants would be adjusted, if at all. However, any adjustment which increases transportation aid would have the effect of reducing total foundation aid, since payments for transportation aid under the Quality Education Act are deducted from maximum State school aid before foundation aid is calculated.

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67.

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR NEWS RELEASE

CN-001
Contact:

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Release:

Tuesday
Sept. 8, 1992

GOVERNOR SIGNS SCHOOL BUS SEAT BELT LAWS *New Jersey First State To Mandate Safety Measures*

WEST ORANGE -- After a nearly 20-year legislative gridlock, Governor Jim Florio today signed legislation requiring new school buses to be equipped with seat belts and roof escape hatches -- making New Jersey the first state in the nation to mandate school bus safety as law.

"This legislation is for the children of New Jersey. New Jersey is now the first state in the nation to write the ABCs of school bus safety into law. Parents will send their children off to school knowing that they are buckled up for safety in the very best school buses on the road," said Governor Florio, at the Roosevelt Middle School, which as part of the West Orange School District, has voluntarily required seat belts on all new district buses.

"Our most basic values tell us that these new rules are a good deal for the children of New Jersey. One child's life saved or protected from serious injury is beyond price," he said.

The two-prong safety measures require all new school buses to be equipped with seat belts, 28-inch seat backs and roof hatches. Approximately 900 new large buses are purchased each year. Although some New Jersey school districts and other states have voluntarily undertaken school bus seat belt efforts, New Jersey is the first state to mandate these safety measures.

The legislative debate over seat belts on school buses has raged for the past 19 years. In April, Governor Florio had urged the state's consumer advocates to help break the gridlock and push for passage of the legislation. A 1989 study by the New Jersey Institute of Technology, commissioned by the state, concluded that installing belts would improve overall safety performance. The law has the support of the state PTA and the state Board of Education.

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"Research, experience and common sense all say that seat belts protect children. Twenty years ago, we didn't require anyone to wear seat belts. Then we got smart about cars, but the lack of school bus belts undermined that important message," Governor Florio said. "Our seat belt and roof hatch laws are simple common sense, and they are an important lesson in responsibility and consistency. Now kids will know that in a car or in a school bus, you must buckle up."

"In an accident, every minute counts. This bill is now the law because a team of every day heroes fought the special interests. They never gave up for one simple reason -- the safety of our children depended on it and every family in New Jersey is a winner today."

Senator Louis Bassano and Assemblypersons Harriet Derman and John Kelly are the sponsors of both S 356/A 1494, which requires two roof hatches, and S 291/A 1216, which requires certain seat height and seat belts on school buses.

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