

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

L.D. 329

AN ACT TO INCREASE THE FINE FOR PASSING A STOPPED SCHOOL BUS

April 22, 2025

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and esteemed members of the Transportation Committee, I am Steven Bailey, Executive Director of the Maine School Management Association, testifying on behalf of the legislative committees of the Maine School Boards Association and the Maine School Superintendents Association in strong support for L.D. 329, which proposes increasing the minimum fine for illegally passing a stopped school bus from \$250 to \$1,000. This legislation is a crucial step toward enhancing the safety of our children and reinforcing the seriousness of this traffic violation.

In just one single day during the 2018–2019 school year, Maine reported 173 instances of vehicles illegally passing school buses. This alarming statistic underscores the urgency of implementing effective measures to protect students. [News Center Maine](https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/as-seen-on-tv/the-new-safety-addition-to-some-maine-school-buses/97-2036babb-f1d8-4f2a-9180-482d077add70)

Recognizing the severity of this issue, Maine passed Senate Bill 166 in 2019, legalizing the use of school bus stop-arm cameras statewide. This legislation allows school districts to install cameras on school buses to identify and penalize motorists who disregard the stop-arm signal, thereby enhancing enforcement and deterrence. [busboss.com](https://www.busboss.com/blog/maine-passes-school-bus-stop-arm-camera-bill)

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) has highlighted the prevalence of illegal passing nationwide, with over 43 million instances reported annually. This data emphasizes the need for robust enforcement measures, such as stop-arm cameras, to ensure the safety of students.

Increasing the fine for illegally passing a stopped school bus is a necessary and effective measure to protect our children. By aligning with national best practices and heeding expert recommendations, Maine can take a significant step toward ensuring the safety of students traveling to and from school.

I urge the committee to pass L.D. 329 and send a clear message that the safety of our children is paramount.

<https://www.newscentermaine.com/article/news/local/as-seen-on-tv/the-new-safety-addition-to-some-maine-school-buses/97-2036babb-f1d8-4f2a-9180-482d077add70>

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