



Pinny Beebe-Center
Senator, District 12

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Senator Pinny Beebe-Center in Support of
LD 2159, “An Act to Require All School Buses to be Equipped with and use
Additional Safety Equipment,”

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation
January 29, 2026

Senator Nangle, Representative Crafts, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, my name is Pinny Beebe-Center. I have the honor of representing Senate District 12, which covers nearly all of Knox County and includes the Rockland School District. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 2159, “An Act to Require All School Buses to be Equipped with and use Additional Safety Equipment.”

On November 21st, 2025, a 12-year-old student in Rockland got off his school bus and was run over by that bus. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) released its initial findings after a preliminary investigation.

According to the NTSB, the RSU 13 school bus stopped at the intersection of Eliza Steele Drive and Broadway at around 2:20 in the afternoon to unload three student passengers. In front of where the bus stopped was a marked pedestrian crosswalk. According to the NTSB report, the 12-year-old was the last to exit the bus. He walked toward the front of the bus and, as he stepped onto the marked crosswalk at the right front corner of the bus, the bus began to move forward, hitting the boy. The boy fell to the ground and was subsequently run over by the bus. He died of his injuries. A traffic report by the Rockland Police Department revealed that the bus crossing arm was not engaged at the time.

A mere three weeks later, on December 16th, 2025, a second student in Standish was run over by his school bus and died of his injuries. In this case, the preliminary NTSB report indicated that the student was a 5-year-old kindergartener who approached the bus from the rear and attempted to board. As he did so, the bus door closed, trapping his arm. The child was dragged 300 feet before falling onto the ground and being run over by the bus.

Two accidents resulting in the deaths of two students in a mere 3 weeks. The circumstances of each death had already been subject to change under Maine law, but each change had resulted in requirements for bus safety in the future, not retroactively. The crossing arm was addressed in a 2019 bill that required all buses bought from 2021 onward to have a crossing arm, but no change was required for older buses, and no requirement to use a crossing arm was built into the statute. The required installation of “anti-pinch” sensors to prevent a school bus door from trapping a student was addressed in 2023 and required the installation of the anti-pinch sensors for all buses purchased in 2025 and going forward. The bus in Standish lacked a sensor.



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Waiting for school districts around the state to slowly replace their buses is no longer tenable — if it ever was. This bill will include a fiscal note, as it will require that all buses have the required safety equipment installed by the start of the fall 2026 school year. The governor has signaled that she will provide school funding for this in her supplemental budget proposal.

I urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 2159. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Pinny Beebe-Center
State Senator, District 12