

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5114

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SYNOPSIS AS ENACTED

Brief Description: Requiring safety enhancements for student transportation.

SPONSORS: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Murray, Bailey, Bauer, Thorsness, Erwin, Gaspard, A. Smith, Rinehart, Madsen, Talmadge, Wojahn, Rasmussen, Conner and Snyder; by request of Task Force on Student Transp. Safety).

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

BACKGROUND:

The Task Force on Student Transportation Safety was established in 1989 to develop recommendations for reducing the dangers children face as they travel to and from school. Among its 11 recommendations are equipping school buses with crossing arms and providing bus drivers additional resources to maintain discipline on buses.

Crossing control arms are devices mounted to the front of buses that, when extended, force students to walk at least five feet in front of the bus. Crossing arms keep students within the bus driver's view to prevent fatalities and injuries during passenger loading and unloading. Inside the buses, monitors have proven helpful in controlling student behavior.

Under current law, the state pays the cost of transporting students who live beyond a one-mile radius of school. The state will also pay to transport students living closer if it is determined the students' route to school is hazardous due to traffic related conditions.

SUMMARY:

All school buses owned or contracted by school districts in the state must be equipped with a crossing arm by September 1, 1992. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is responsible for purchasing and distributing the crossing arms by October 1, 1991. School districts are responsible for their installation.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction and at least one school district shall conduct a pilot program to test the feasibility of using video cameras inside school buses to reduce student discipline problems and help school bus drivers identify students who create problems. Findings shall be reported to the Education Committees of the Legislature by December 31, 1991.

By December 1, 1991 the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall review the current use of aides on special education buses and provide the Legislature with recommended guidelines, and associated fiscal impacts, for increasing the use of aides on special education buses.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in cooperation with school districts, the State Patrol, and local law enforcement personnel, shall develop an expanded definition of "hazardous walking conditions" to include "social hazards" for the purposes of student transportation funding. Social hazards to be considered include unacceptable levels of narcotic activity, sex offenders, prostitution, street violence, and environmentally dangerous areas. The proposed definition and guidelines, with associated fiscal impacts, shall be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 1991.

If funding for the bill is not included in the budget, the bill shall be null and void.

VOTES ON FINAL PASSAGE:

Senate	44	0	
House	93	5	(House amended)
Senate	45	0	(Senate concurred)

EFFECTIVE: July 28, 1991