

---

SENATE BILL 6481

---

State of Washington                      52nd Legislature                      1992 Regular Session

By Senators Bailey, Murray, Craswell, Erwin, Oke, Thorsness and Skratek

Read first time 02/05/92. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to warning lights on school buses; and amending RCW  
2 46.37.190.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4            **Sec. 1.** RCW 46.37.190 and 1987 c 330 s 710 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6            (1) Every authorized emergency vehicle shall, in addition to any  
7 other equipment and distinctive marking required by this chapter, be  
8 equipped with at least one lamp capable of displaying a red light  
9 visible from at least five hundred feet in normal sunlight and a siren  
10 capable of giving an audible signal.

11            (2) Every school bus and private carrier bus shall, in addition to  
12 any other equipment and distinctive markings required by this chapter,  
13 be equipped with a "stop" signal upon a background not less than  
14 fourteen by eighteen inches displaying the word "stop" in letters of

1 distinctly contrasting colors not less than eight inches high, and  
2 shall further be equipped with signal lamps mounted as high and as  
3 widely spaced laterally as practicable, which shall be capable of  
4 displaying to the front two alternately flashing red lights located at  
5 the same level and to the rear two alternately flashing red lights  
6 located at the same level and these lights shall have sufficient  
7 intensity to be visible at five hundred feet in normal sunlight.

8       (3)(a) A school bus may be equipped with a single hazard strobe  
9 lamp. The lamp must meet the standards and specifications established  
10 by the chief of the Washington state patrol and must be mounted on the  
11 centerline of the roof in the rear one-half of the bus, but no closer  
12 than six feet from the rear of the bus measured from a vertical plane  
13 tangent to the rearmost point of the bus body.

14       (b) A hazard strobe lamp may be used when the bus is occupied with  
15 school children or when one or more of the following conditions exist:

16       (i) The bus is in motion in inclement, sight-obscuring conditions,  
17 including but not limited to, rain, fog, snow, and smoke;

18       (ii) There is a need to improve the visibility of the bus when  
19 stopping on, standing on, or starting onto a highway; or

20       (iii) There is limited visibility caused by geographic hazards,  
21 including but not limited to, winding roadways, hills, trees, and  
22 buildings.

23       (4) Vehicles operated by public agencies whose law enforcement  
24 duties include the authority to stop and detain motor vehicles on the  
25 public highways of the state may be equipped with a siren and lights of  
26 a color and type designated by the state patrol for that purpose. The  
27 state patrol may prohibit the use of these sirens and lights on  
28 vehicles other than the vehicles described in this subsection.

29       (~~(4)~~) (5) The lights described in this section shall not be  
30 mounted nor used on any vehicle other than a school bus, a private

1 carrier bus, or an authorized emergency or law enforcement vehicle.  
2 Optical strobe light devices shall not be installed or used on any  
3 vehicle other than an emergency vehicle authorized by the state patrol  
4 or a publicly-owned law enforcement or emergency vehicle. An "optical  
5 strobe light device" means a strobe light device which emits an optical  
6 signal at a specific frequency to a traffic control light enabling the  
7 vehicle in which the strobe light device is used to obtain the right of  
8 way at intersections.

9       (~~(5)~~) (6) The use of the signal equipment described herein shall  
10 impose upon drivers of other vehicles the obligation to yield right of  
11 way and stop as prescribed in RCW 46.61.210, 46.61.370, and 46.61.350.