

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6102

As Passed Senate, February 12, 2020

Title: An act relating to stop signal warning devices on school buses.

Brief Description: Adjusting stop signal requirements for school buses.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Mullet, Wilson, C. and Sheldon; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 1/21/20, 1/22/20 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 2/12/20, 42-3.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Aligns the state requirements for the size of the word "stop" on a school bus arm stop sign with federal rule.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hobbs, Chair; Saldaña, Vice Chair; King, Ranking Member; Sheldon, Assistant Ranking Member; Cleveland, Fortunato, Lovelett, Nguyen, O'Ban, Padden, Randall, Takko, Wilson, C. and Zeiger.

Staff: Kim Johnson (786-7472)

Background: School buses are used to transport students to and from school or in connection with designated school activities.

School district boards of directors are responsible for the operation of student transportation programs. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration establishes federal safety requirements for school buses, including requirements for structural integrity, periodic inspections, and school bus seating and equipment standards. In addition to the federal requirements, states may also adopt requirements for school buses and their safe operation.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Under both federal and state law, school buses must be equipped with a stop arm that extends from the bus indicating that traffic must stop to allow children to pass safely. The size and style of the stop sign for buses are set out in federal rule and state law. Currently, the federal rule requires that the word "stop" be at least 5.9 inches high. The state statute requires the word "stop" be at least eight inches high.

Summary of Bill: The state requirement that the word "stop" displayed on a school bus stop arm is changed to specify the letters be at least 5.9 inches high.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The bill will align our state law with the federal law regarding the height of the letters used on a stop paddle on a school bus. Assures that all our school buses are in compliance with both state and federal law.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Patti Enbody, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.