



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senate Transportation Committee Approves Legislation to Raise Penalties for Drivers Who Illegally Pass Stopped School Buses

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. May 1, 2012

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick), Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee, today announced that the Committee has passed legislation to raise the penalties for drivers who illegally pass stopped school buses.

"Drivers are required to stop for school buses with red lights flashing in order to protect the children boarding or exiting the bus. Illegally passing a stopped school bus jeopardizes the lives and safety of the students on the bus. Stronger fines and penalties will create a greater deterrent and give drivers another incentive not to pass stopped school buses," said Senator Fuschillo.

The legislation (S515, Sen. Maziarz) would raise the maximum fines for drivers that illegally pass a school bus which is stopped with its red lights flashing. The maximum fine for first-time offenders would increase from \$400 to \$750. A second offense within three years would carry a maximum fine of \$1150, up from the current maximum of \$750. Offenders who commit three or more offenses within three years would face a maximum fine of \$1500 as opposed to the current \$1000 maximum.

Additionally, the legislation creates criminal penalties if drivers illegally pass a school bus and cause injuries or fatalities. Individuals who injure someone as a result of illegally passing a school bus would face charges of aggravated vehicular assault. Drivers who kill someone as a result of illegally passing a school bus would face charges of criminally negligent homicide.

In addition, the Committee also approved legislation which would:

* Help DMV gather information more effectively about the accidents involving mobile telephone use by requiring police reports to note whether a cell phone was being used at the time of the accident (S842, Sen. Stavisky).

* Prohibit drivers from operating any motor vehicle that has a television or other video monitor within the driver's view, excluding navigation systems (S920, Sen. Marcellino).