



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

## Senator Phillips Announces Bill To Help Ensure Safety Of Millions Of Students On School Buses In New York Passes State Senate

ELAINE PHILLIPS June 6, 2018



Senator Elaine Phillips announced today that the New York State Senate recently passed a bill, which she sponsored, to help improve the development of school bus safety and security and better protect millions of students and personnel who ride the bus to school in New York every day.

“No parent should have to fear when they send their children off to school,” Senator Phillips said. “This measure will enhance safety procedures on school buses by ensuring district chief

emergency officers can assist in implementing and carrying out safety policies and procedures, including response to threats, protocols for responding to emergencies and annual training.”

The bill, S.8234, would help enhance safety standards on school buses by improving the coordination of policies and procedures within the school district, and put those policies and procedures on par with similar measures already in place for school buildings.

The legislation expands the duties of district chief emergency officers so that they could assist in the coordinated development of policies and procedures, including:

- Response to implied or direct threats of violence by or against students, school bus personnel, or other persons that involve a school bus or school transportation facility;
- Protocols for responding to other emergency situations that involve a school bus or school transportation facility;
- Policies for annual school bus safety training for staff and students; and
- School bus drivers and other school transportation personnel would participate as members of district-wide school safety and building-level emergency response teams.

In addition to this legislation, the Senate earlier this year passed a package of critical school safety measures that would strengthen security and help keep students safe. Those bills would:

- Increase the ability of schools to hire qualified security personnel;
- Create new state funding mechanisms for infrastructure investments that improve school safety;

- Increase access to school-based mental health services;
- Expand state actions and intelligence coordination to protect schools against attack; and
- Strengthen penalties for crimes on school grounds.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.