



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senate Republican Majority: Why Do Student Street Safety Bills Soar Through The Senate And Go To The Assembly To Die?

JOHN J. FLANAGAN July 26, 2018

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL SAFETY, SCHOOL BUS SAFETY, CHILDREN, STUDENTS**



**The New York State Senate Republican Majority** today demanded answers from the New York State Assembly on why a long list of common-sense, non-partisan, statewide school street safety measures die year after year. The laundry list of Assembly school street safety failures include legislation like license suspensions for drivers speeding in school zones multiple times or overtaking school buses putting children in serious danger.

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*“Year after year the Senate works to protect children from reckless drivers and it’s shameful that the Assembly has failed to act on a long list of legislation that would keep children across the state safe. While they sped out of town on the last day of session and recklessly malign Republicans, who have put forward solutions to New York City’s speed camera program including an extender and additional measures to slow drivers down in real time like speed bumps, the Assembly continuously jeopardizes the lives of students across the state. Every New Yorker from upstate to downstate should know about the Assembly’s complete inaction on critical, life-saving measures,” said Majority Leader John J. Flanagan (2nd Senate District).*

This year the Senate passed a number of non-partisan student street safety bills that each received unanimous support, but each died in the Assembly, including:

- **LICENSE SUSPENSION FOR TWO SCHOOL SPEED ZONE VIOLATIONS** - Motorists who fly through school zones twice within 18 months would lose driving privileges for putting children’s lives at risk under [S336B](#), sponsored by **Senator Jose Peralta (13<sup>th</sup> Senate District)**. This common-sense license suspension bill passed the Senate twice unanimously but died in the Assembly.
- **LICENSE SUSPENSION FOR TWO SCHOOL BUS OVERTAKES** - Drivers who fail to yield to a stopped school bus two times within 18 months would have their licenses suspended under [S1064A](#), sponsored by **Senator John Bonacic (42<sup>nd</sup> Senate District)**. Though it unanimously passed the Senate three times, it died in the Assembly.
- **SCHOOL BUS SAFETY CAMERAS** - Overtaking a stopped school bus puts the lives of children crossing the street at serious risk. School bus safety cameras, attached to the stop-arms of buses, would capture violators and motorists caught violating the law would face \$250 fines. Sponsored by **Senator Catharine Young (57<sup>th</sup> Senate District)**, [S518B](#) passed unanimously in the Senate and remained stuck in the Assembly’s Codes Committee this

year.

- **PROHIBITING SEX OFFENDERS FROM DRIVING SCHOOL BUSES** - Believe it or not, sex offenders could wind up behind the wheels of school buses due to loopholes in the law. For example, a person convicted of third degree rape can drive a school bus after five years. Legislation sponsored by **Senator Sue Serino (41<sup>st</sup> Senate District)** corrects this by permanently prohibiting sex offenders from driving school buses. [S6173](#) passed the Senate unanimously for two consecutive years and died in the Assembly.
- **INCREASING FINES AND PENALTIES FOR DRIVERS WHO PASS STOPPED SCHOOL BUSES** - Children who exit school buses often dash out into the road when exiting or boarding a school bus. On average 11 children under the age of 18 die because of school related vehicle accidents, according to statistics from the National Highway Safety Administration. In order to deter motorists from overtaking school buses, [S1023](#) by **Senator Rich Funke (55<sup>th</sup> Senate District)** increases monetary fines for violations of the law and requires a charge of criminally negligent homicide if a driver causes the death of a child. This passed the Senate twice unanimously and died in the Assembly.
- **INCREASING FINES FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES OVERTAKING SCHOOL BUSES** - Larger commercial vehicles pose an even greater threat to students if they overtake a school bus and should face greater penalties for violating the law. **Senator Patty Ritchie's (48<sup>th</sup> Senate District)** legislation, [S5897A](#), increases fines for these vehicles passed twice unanimously and died in the Assembly.
- **ADDING INHALANTS TO DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE** - As synthetic drugs and inhalants become more popular, they must be considered drugs in the public health law. Back in 2004, Brooklyn man Vincent Litto used a can of Dust-Off spray to get high while passengers were in his car. After huffing while driving, Litto drove into oncoming lanes of traffic and a passenger was killed. [S889](#) sponsored by **Senator George Amedore (46<sup>th</sup> Senate District)** adds inhalants to the law under which a person could be charged for driving

under the influence of drugs or drugs and alcohol. Litto was unable to face charges of vehicular manslaughter or vehicular assault. The Senate passed this legislation unanimously for three consecutive years, and it died in the Assembly.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S336B**

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- Introduced
  
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
- 

Requires a 60 day license suspension for any driver convicted of 2 speeding violations within a school zone, committed within an 18 month period of time

January 03, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by [Jose Peralta](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S1064A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

[Relates to increasing the penalties for passing a stopped school bus](#)

January 06, 2017

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In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **John J. Bonacic**

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S518B

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- Introduced
  - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Authorizes the installation and use of photo monitoring devices on school buses to detect and record vehicles illegally passing or overtaking a school bus

January 03, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Catharine Young**

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S1023

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

**Creates stricter fines and criminal penalties for passing a stopped school bus**

January 06, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Rich Funke**

Do you support this bill?

NAY

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## 2017-S5897A

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Relates to increasing the fines associated with passing a stopped school bus by certain vehicles

May 05, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Patty Ritchie**

Do you support this bill?



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## 2017-S889

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Relates to driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of drugs or combined use of drugs and alcohol

January 05, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **George Amedore**

Do you support this bill?

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