

2025 NSTA CAPITOL HILL BUS-IN

MARCH 26 - 27, 2025



NSTA URGES CONGRESS TO MAKE THE 'UNDER THE HOOD' TESTING REQUIREMENT EXEMPTION PERMANENT TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER SHORTAGE

- A significant barrier to entry for new bus drivers can be the "Under the Hood" testing requirement necessary to obtain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Federal regulations require CDL holders to be able to lift the hood of a school bus and identify engine parts and functions - a requirement that is aimed mainly for the long haul trucking industry.
- School buses never operate far from their home base (bus depot) and if there is a mechanical issue, drivers are instructed to dispatch a mechanic and request a replacement bus to the location and not to leave their post with children on board.
- The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has repeatedly stated that this exemption does not have an adverse impact on safety.

The Driving Forward Act:

- Would make the Under the Hood exemption permanent and require states that choose to adopt it to report on the numbers of drivers that get the K license;
- Permanent adoption gives surety and more time for state driver's licensing agencies to implement the exemption;
- Permanency would lead to wider adoption of the exemption by states and could expand the school bus driver pool nationwide.

IMPACT OF THE UNDER THE HOOD EXEMPTION

13 States

FL, IA, KS, MD, ME, MS, NJ, NY, OK, PA, TX, and WI

1,290 Drivers

School Bus Drivers licensed under the UTH Waivers/Exemptions

THE DAILY IMPACT

64,500 Students

K-12 students transported daily by drivers licensed through the UTH Exemption

NSTA is seeking co-sponsors for the "Driving Forward Act"

ILLEGAL PASSING OF STOPPED SCHOOL BUSES CONTINUES TO PLAGUE AMERICA'S ROADWAYS

- According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) the yellow school bus is the safest form of transportation to school for students.
- Children are in more danger when embarking or disembarking their school buses by motor vehicle traffic not obeying the legal requirements of an extended stop arm and flashing lights. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing and its stop arm extended.
- A recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) survey revealed alarming results surrounding the public perception of why individuals illegally pass stopped school buses.
- It is past time for a national Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to educate the motoring public that the illegal passing of a stopped school bus is a life-threatening situation for students. The "Brake for Kids" Act directs NHTSA to execute a nationwide public safety messaging campaign involving television and radio advertisements to highlight this illegal activity and educate the public that the illegal passing of a stopped school bus can have fatal consequences.



Per NASDPTS, 43.5 million illegal passing violations occur every 180-day school year in America

NHTSA Survey Results November 2024 (Unweighted)

31.9%



31.9% of respondents think other drivers "don't care".

25.6%



25.6% of respondents believe others were "in a hurry".

23.1%



23.1% of respondents think other drivers "didn't know the law".

11.2%



11.2% of respondents believe drivers are "distracted".

**NSTA is seeking co-sponsors for the
Brake for Kids Act**