<u>**For Immediate Release**</u>

Contact: Curt Macysyn, Executive Director   November 15, 2021
(703) 684-3200 ext. 700
CMacysyn@yellowbuses.org

NSTA applauds enactment of original "STOP for School Buses Act" in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

The National School Transportation (NSTA) applauds the inclusion of its top legislative priority – "STOP for School Buses Act" in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – signed by President Joseph Biden today. In particular, NSTA notes that this great legislative victory could not have been accomplished without strong bi-partisan support from Senators Todd Young (IN) and Gary Peters (MI), as well as House of Representatives Members Jackie Walorski (IN-2) and Julia Brownley (CA-26).

The President's signature culminates a multi-year effort by NSTA to advocate for this important initiative, including a School Bus Illegal Passing Technology Showcase on October 23, 2019, on the Capitol Grounds in Washington, D.C. during National School Bus Safety Week. The event drew all four primary bill sponsors, and each participated in operating various safety technologies on a school bus.

Overall, with respect to Surface Transportation, the new law bill reauthorizes federal highway, transit, motor carrier, and vehicle safety programs for five years until FY 2026 - without unnecessary and burdensome mandates, and it preserves the motor fuels tax exemption. The enacted bill also calls for a comprehensive federal program for preventing illegal passing of school buses, as well as providing funding for Electric School Buses, and Nearly Zero Emissions Vehicles.

It also requires the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S.D.O.T.) to review illegal passing laws, penalties and levels of enforcement in all 50 states, various technologies and driver education materials and make recommendations on best practices and most effective approaches. The new law also directs U.S.D.O.T. to implement a public safety messaging campaign; similar to what has been done previously through the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA).

While school bus transportation remains the safest form of transportation over all other modes, according to DOT statistics, the most pressing problem it faces centers on students being put in harm's way by other motorists failing to yield for stopped school buses. Data indicates that nearly 15 million illegal passings occur during every 180-day school year and these occurrences continue to rise. The new U.S.D.O.T. program provides an effective tool for states and local governments utilize in trying to prevent illegal passing of school buses and ensure students are just as safe getting on and off their yellow school buses as they are riding inside their yellow school buses.

"Riding in a yellow school bus remains the safest mode of transportation to-and- from school for students. Unfortunately, illegal school bus passings by motorists continue to plague the nation, and the comprehensive U.S.D.O.T. program to address illegal passing contained in IIJA will

20211115C | 7301.45

implement a national campaign to raise local awareness of this most concerning issue with the shared goal of making student commutes even safer," said NSTA President, Carina Noble.

"NSTA would like to thank Senators Young and Peters, as well as Members of Congress Walorski and Brownley for their continued support of the original STOP for School Buses Act. On behalf of the nearly 26 million students, who rely on the school bus for transportation from home to school, we thank these members for their stewardship of this legislation through this arduous process, and appreciate their efforts to ensure the enactment of these important measures," said NSTA Executive Director, Curt Macysyn.

About NSTA: National School Transportation Association has been the voice of private school bus contractors, manufacturers and suppliers since 1964. The association provides school transportation professionals with the tools and resources they need to make school buses safe, affordable, and efficient nationwide.