

Broome County Office of the Sheriff



David E. Harder
Sheriff

Alex J. Minor
Undersheriff

155 Lt. VanWinkle Drive
Binghamton, New York 13905

June 15, 2015

Dear Members of the New York State Senate and Assembly:

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law required all motorists approaching a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing to STOP for that school bus in recognition of the fact that children will be boarding or departing the school bus.

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation (NYAPT) has estimated that more than 50,000 motorists pass stopped school buses every day of the school year. That is unacceptable safety risk for our children and we believe it is important for us to do all that we can to reduce that rate and ensure the safety of our children.

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee coordinated a one day statewide enforcement effort on April 16, 2015, which was entitled "Operation SAFE STOP". During this effort, it was reported that 1, 186 tickets were written by the police to motorists who had illegally passed stopped school buses that had their red lights flashing. Moreover, a recent one-day survey of some 2,600 school bus drivers revealed that 54,350 illegal passes occurred on that day, including nearly 1,600 passes on the passenger side of the school bus where our children board and depart the bus. These increased incidents of passenger-side passes are particularly disturbing and must be addressed directly.

As the Sheriff of Broome County, I strongly support the passage of legislation that will allow school buses in New York to be equipped with video recording devices that capture images of the license plate of a passing vehicle and for those images to be utilized towards issuing tickets and collecting fines from violators.

Specifically, **I support S.3509-Young/A.1520-Magnarelli**, which will accomplish these objectives and I would urge the Senate and Assembly to pass both bills for enactment into law. The children of our state deserve nothing less than our action to protect them and keep them safe. S. 3509 by Senator Young is before your committee on June 2, 2015. I would urge you to vote to report Senator Young's bill out of the Committee so that it may move toward passage and help keep our children safe!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David E. Harder".

David E Harder
Sheriff

DEH/bmo