



NYAPT

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION FOR PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

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Our future is riding with us!

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NYAPT STATEMENT ON NEW YORK STATE BUDGET ADOPTION

The New York Association for Pupil Transportation issues the following statement in regard to the adoption of the 2018-2019 New York State budget:

The members of the New York Association for Pupil Transportation are grateful that the State Budget that was adopted yesterday by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor achieved the following:

- Increased Foundation Aid for schools in New York by nearly \$1 billion, for a total of some \$26.7 billion in education aid. Our schools are in need of those increased funds to meet ever-greater demands for services and improved performance. This is a strong statement in support of our schools;
- Provided for full reimbursement of \$1.909 billion in state Transportation to support school district expenses on transportation in accordance with current formulas and aid ratios;
- Ensured that expense-based aids, including Transportation, will continue to be reimbursed in accordance with current formulas and aid ratios, and will NOT be subject to arbitrary caps in the growth of those aid categories;
- Allocated \$400,000 to the State Education Department for the School Bus Driver Safety Training program which provides for the development of important training and educational activities for school bus drivers and school bus attendants and monitors in our state. NYAPT recognizes the expanding needs for training and urges SED to be proactive in developing new and better courses for our school bus drivers and attendants/monitors.

NYAPT regrets that the Legislature failed to come to an agreement on an Executive Budget proposal that would have allowed school bus operators to install and utilize 'stop arm cameras' on school buses. The cameras would greatly aid in the identification and ticketing of motorists who illegally pass stopped school buses. We believe this is critical legislation to enable New York to decrease the incidence of such illegal passing from the current dangerously high levels of 50,000 such passes each day. School bus drivers across the State witness this dangerous practice every day, even several times a day. They know the danger that it presents for our children. Something must be done and we will work hard with the Legislature to enact the bills (S.518 and A.321) sponsored by Senator Young and Assemblyman Magnarelli that would enable the use of Stop Arm Cameras on our school buses.

The Legislature also did not incorporate the proposal in the Executive Budget to increase fines on motorists for violating Section 1174 of the Vehicle and Traffic Law which prohibits passing stopped school buses that have their red lights flashing. We are hopeful that the Legislature will act on an increase in fines as well as other legislation relating to illegal passing before the adjourn this session.

NYAPT will also actively seek passage of other school bus safety legislation related to criminal background checks for drivers as well as drug and alcohol testing for drivers. We will also seek legislation related to criminal trespass on a school bus so that our drivers and our students are protected from violent acts on the bus.

Our complete Legislative Agenda appears on our NYAPT website at www.nyapt.org/advocacy.

For the Children!!