
DIGEST

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HB 695 Original

2015 Regular Session

Abramson

Abstract: Limits certain present law restrictions on where school buses may load/unload students.

Present law requires the governing authority of each public school, including charter schools, to adopt policies or to make provision in bus transportation service agreements to:

- (1) Prohibit school bus drivers from loading/unloading students at school while the bus is in a traffic lane of a street unless the shoulder of a municipal road is the only available alternative and the municipality has not designated that shoulder for loading/unloading students during school zone hours. Proposed law retains present law.
- (2) Requires loading/unloading students near their homes on a shoulder unless there is no shoulder; if the loading/unloading must occur in a lane of traffic, requires that the bus be in the lane farthest to the right side of the road so that the student does not need to cross any lane of traffic to get onto or off of the bus. Proposed law retains present law except to provide that using the shoulder is not required if it is not safe and to prohibit the bus from loading/unloading where there is a lane of traffic between the bus and the right-side edge of the road rather than prohibiting loading/unloading where a student would have to cross a lane of traffic.

Present law also prohibits school bus drivers from loading/unloading, either at school or at or near homes, in a manner or in a location that results in students crossing lanes of traffic on a state highway or any other type of street. Proposed law limits the applicability of this prohibition to certain highways where a vehicle is not required to stop for a bus that is loading/unloading as follows:

Present law generally requires vehicles to stop when they meet a school bus that is stopped to load/unload students. Present law (R.S. 32:80(C)) provides, however, that a vehicle is not required to stop if it is traveling on a divided highway in a roadway separate from where the bus is stopped. Proposed law limits the applicability of present law regarding where school buses may load/unload students so as to prohibit loading/unloading only on a divided highway in a location that would require the student to cross lanes of traffic on the divided highway. Where traffic is required to stop for the bus, students needing to cross the street could be loaded/unloaded.

Present law (R.S. 32:80(A)(2)) specifies that a highway with two or more lanes in each direction and a two-way left turn lane is a divided highway with separate roadways, and so oncoming traffic is not required to stop for a bus on such a highway. Proposed law removes this exception from the

requirement that vehicles stop for a school bus that is loading/unloading students.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 17:158(J)(2) and (3) and R.S. 32:80(C))