

# **WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**

**2019 REGULAR SESSION**

**Committee Substitute**

**for**

**Senate Bill 238**

SENATORS BALDWIN, CLINE, JEFFRIES, AND LINDSAY,

*original sponsors*

[Originating in the Committee on the Judiciary;

Reported on February 21, 2019]



1 A BILL to amend and reenact §17C-12-7 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating  
2 to increasing certain penalties for illegally passing a stopped school bus; increasing  
3 driver's license suspension periods for violators; and requiring forward and rear-facing  
4 exterior cameras on all county school buses purchased after July 1, 2019.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

*PREAMBLE: This act shall be known as the Haven McCarthy Memorial Act.*

**ARTICLE 12. SPECIAL STOPS REQUIRED.**

**§17C-12-7. Overtaking and passing school bus; penalties; signs and warning lights upon buses; requirements for sale of buses; mounting of cameras; educational information campaign; limitation on idling.**

1 (a) The driver of a vehicle, upon meeting or overtaking from either direction any school  
2 bus which has stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging any school children, shall stop  
3 the vehicle before reaching the school bus when there is in operation on the school bus flashing  
4 warning signal lights, as referred to in §17C-12-8 of this code, and the driver may not proceed  
5 until the school bus resumes motion, or is signaled by the school bus driver to proceed or the  
6 visual signals are no longer actuated. This section applies wherever the school bus is receiving  
7 or discharging children including, but not limited to, any street, highway, parking lot, private road,  
8 or driveway: *Provided*, That the driver of a vehicle upon a controlled access highway need not  
9 stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is on a different roadway or adjacent to the  
10 highway and where pedestrians are not permitted to cross the roadway.

11 (b) Any driver acting in violation of subsection (a) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor  
12 and, upon conviction for a first offense, shall be fined not less than ~~\$250~~ \$500 or more than ~~\$500~~  
13 \$1,000, or confined in jail not more than six months, or both fined and confined. Upon conviction  
14 of a second violation of subsection (a) of this section, the driver shall be fined not less than ~~\$500~~  
15 \$1,000 nor more than ~~\$1,000~~ \$1,500, or confined in jail not more than six months, or both fined  
16 and confined. Upon conviction of a third or subsequent violation of subsection (a) of this section,

17 the driver shall be fined ~~\$1,000~~ \$2,000 and confined not less than 48 hours in jail but not more  
18 than six months.

19 (c) Where the actual identity of the operator of a motor vehicle operated in violation of  
20 subsection (a) of this section is unknown but the license plate number of the motor vehicle is  
21 known, it may be inferred that the operator was an owner or lessee of the motor vehicle for  
22 purposes of the probable cause determination. Where there is more than one registered owner  
23 or lessee, the inference created by this subsection shall apply to the first listed owner or lessee  
24 as found on the motor vehicle registration: *Provided*, That a person charged with a violation of  
25 subsection (a) of this section, under the provisions of this subsection, where the sole evidence  
26 against the owner or lessee is the presence of the vehicle at the scene at the time of the offense  
27 shall only be subject to the applicable fine set forth in subsection (b) of this section upon  
28 conviction: *Provided, however*, That the offenses set forth in subsections (f) and (g) of this section  
29 are separate and distinct from that set forth in subsection (a) of this section.

30 (d) Service of process of a complaint issued pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall  
31 be effected consistent with West Virginia Rule of Criminal Procedure 4.

32 (e) In addition to the penalties prescribed in subsection (b) of this section, the  
33 Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall, upon conviction, suspend the driver's license of the person  
34 so convicted:

35 (1) Of a first offense under subsection (b) of this section, for a period of ~~thirty~~ 60 days;

36 (2) Of a second offense under subsection (b) of this section, for a period of ~~ninety~~ 180  
37 days; or

38 (3) Of a third or subsequent offense under subsection (b) of this section, for a period of  
39 ~~one hundred eighty days~~ one year.

40 (f) Any driver of a vehicle who willfully violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this  
41 section and the violation causes serious bodily injury to any person other than the driver, is guilty

42 of a felony and, upon conviction, shall be confined in a state correctional facility not less than one  
43 year nor more than three years and fined not less than ~~\$500~~ \$2,000 nor more than ~~\$2,000~~ \$5,000.

44 (g) Any driver of a vehicle who willfully violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this  
45 section, and the violation causes death, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, shall be confined  
46 in a state correctional facility not less than one year nor more than 10 years and fined not less  
47 than ~~\$1,000~~ \$5,000 nor more than ~~\$3,000~~ \$10,000.

48 (h) Every bus used for the transportation of school children shall bear upon the front and  
49 rear of the bus a plainly visible sign containing the words "school bus" in letters not less than eight  
50 inches in height. When a contract school bus is being operated upon a highway for purposes  
51 other than the actual transportation of children either to or from school, all markings on the  
52 contract school bus indicating "school bus" shall be covered or concealed. Any school bus sold  
53 or transferred to another owner by a county board of education, agency or individual shall have  
54 all flashing warning lights disconnected and all lettering removed or permanently obscured, except  
55 when sold or transferred for the transportation of school children: Provided, That every county  
56 board of education shall install forward-facing and rear-facing cameras on all school buses  
57 purchased on or after July 1, 2019, for the purpose of enforcing this section and for any other  
58 lawful purpose.

59 ~~(i) Every county board of education is hereby authorized to mount a camera on any school~~  
60 ~~bus for the purpose of enforcing this section or for any other lawful purpose.~~

61 ~~(j)~~ (i) To the extent that state, federal, or other funds are available, the State Police shall  
62 conduct an information campaign to educate drivers concerning the provisions of this section and  
63 the importance of school bus safety.

64 ~~(k)~~ (j) The State Board of Education shall promulgate a rule in accordance with the  
65 provisions of §29A-3B-1 *et seq.* of this code governing the idling of school buses.