

SENATE, No. 548

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
211th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2004 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Bucco and Karcher

SYNOPSIS

Limits school bus idle time to five minutes with certain exceptions.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/23/2004)

S548 VITALE

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1 AN ACT concerning school buses and supplementing chapter 4 of Title
2 39 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. The driver of a diesel-powered bus which is being used solely
8 for the transportation of children to or from school, a summer day
9 camp or any school connected activity shall not allow or permit the
10 engine to idle for more than five consecutive minutes when the bus is
11 not in motion, except when:

12 a. the vehicle is forced to remain motionless because of traffic
13 conditions over which the operator thereof has no control;

14 b. regulations adopted by federal, State, or local agencies having
15 jurisdiction require the maintenance of a specific temperature for
16 passenger comfort, including heating and air conditioning. In such
17 event, the idling time may be increased, but only to the extent
18 necessary to comply with these regulations;

19 c. the bus is stopped for repairs; or

20 d. a booster cable is connected to the battery of the bus in order to
21 start or restart the bus.

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23 2. The Department of Environmental Protection shall establish an
24 educational program to advise the members of the public and local
25 school districts of the requirements of this act.

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27 3. If the driver of the bus violates the provisions of this act, the
28 owner of the bus, whether it be the local school district or some other
29 person, shall be fined not less than \$25 for each violation.

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31 4. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fifth month after
32 enactment.

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STATEMENT

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37 This bill, which is patterned on legislation that passed in the New
38 York State Senate in May 2002, is intended to reduce the amount of
39 pollution that children breathe while their school buses are idling.

40 It would limit to five minutes the idling time of diesel-powered
41 buses which are used solely for the transportation of children to or
42 from school, a summer day camp or any school connected activity,
43 with various exceptions.

44 The exceptions occur when:

45 a. The vehicle is forced to remain motionless because of traffic
46 conditions over which the operator thereof has no control;

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1 b. Regulations adopted by federal, State or local agencies having
2 jurisdiction require the maintenance of a specific temperature for
3 passenger comfort, including heating and air conditioning;

4 c. The bus is stopped for repairs; or

5 d. A booster cable is connected to the battery of the bus in order
6 to start or restart the bus.

7 The bill also provides that the Department of Environmental
8 Protection is to establish an educational program to advise the
9 members of the public and local school districts of the requirements of
10 the bill.

11 If a bus driver violates the provisions of this bill, the owner of the
12 bus, whether it be a local school district or another person, would be
13 subject to a fine of not less than \$25.