

SENATE, No. 1067

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 2, 1996

By Senator EWING

1 AN ACT concerning school bus equipment and supplementing chapter
2 3B of Title 39 of the New Jersey 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. Every school bus manufactured as a 1997 or newer model, as
8 noted on the vehicle registration, and used to transport children in this
9 State, shall be equipped with a rear bumper extension. The extension
10 shall be substantially constructed and firmly attached, and shall be
11 capable of preventing a vehicle which strikes the rear of a bus from
12 underriding the bus. Such bumper extensions shall meet the
13 requirements to be specified by the State Board of Education, which
14 requirements shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Title
15 or any rule or regulation established pursuant thereto. In establishing
16 these requirements, the department shall review and consider
17 applicable research findings, recommendations and standards of federal
18 agencies, other states and safety organizations.

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20 2. This act shall take effect six months after enactment.

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STATEMENT

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25 This bill would require all 1997 or newer model year school buses
26 used in this State to be equipped with a bumper extension. The
27 bumper extension, or "underride guard," serves as a rear impact
28 protection guard. It would prevent vehicles striking a school bus
29 from the rear from sliding under the bus and causing greater damage
30 to both vehicles.

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32 Current model school buses are equipped with bumpers with an
33 average road clearance of 24 to 29 inches, which is too high to prevent
34 small cars from sliding under them. The National Highway Traffic
35 Safety Administration recommends a maximum 22-inch road clearance
36 for truck bumpers to prevent small car underride and protect their
37 occupants. This bill would require the State Board of Education to
review these and other appropriate recommendations and findings in

1 establishing standards for school bus bumper extensions.

2 The bumper extensions will improve the safety of school bus
3 passengers as well as those in other vehicles involved in rear end
4 crashes.

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9 Requires school bus rear bumper extensions.