Sponsored by:
Assemblyman GEORGE F. GEIST
District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS
Clarifies requirement that school buses are to be equipped with crossing control arms.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

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

1. Section 1 of P.L.1996, c. 96 (C.39:3B-1.1) is amended to read as follows:
   1. Every school bus as defined under R.S.39:1-1, which was originally designed to carry 10 or more passengers and which is in operation on [the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.)] August 6, 1996, transporting public and nonpublic school pupils and every new or used such school bus purchased on or after [the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.) used to transport pupils pursuant to N.J.S.18A:39-1 et seq., including buses used to transport all nonpublic school pupils.] that date to transport public and nonpublic school pupils shall be equipped with a crossing control arm at the right front corner of the bus. In each year subsequent to [the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.)] August 6, 1996, 50 percent of all school bus fleets in operation on [the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.)] that date owned by any agency, a board of education, a nonpublic school or a school bus contractor not already equipped with a crossing control arm shall be so equipped, provided [however] that each vehicle used to transport elementary school students shall be given priority to be equipped with a crossing control arm in the first year following [the effective date] August 6, 1996. The arm shall open and extend out from the front of the bus at least 5 1/2 feet each time the bus door is opened. (cf: P.L.1996, c.96, s.1)

2. Section 2 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.2) is amended to read as follows:
   2. Each agency, school district and nonpublic school that owns and operates its own school buses and each school bus contractor that provides transportation services pursuant to N.J.S.18A:39-1] operates school buses, as defined in section 1 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1), shall receive reimbursement from the Department of Education in an amount up to, but not to exceed, $300 per bus for retrofitting those school buses in operation on [the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.)] August 6, 1996, and an amount up to, but not to exceed, $200 per bus for buses put into operation

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
after that date for the cost of including the crossing control arm on those buses. If any agency, school district, nonpublic school or school bus contractor chooses to equip more than 50 percent of its school buses in any one year, it shall receive a maximum reimbursement for 50 percent of its school buses for that year. Reimbursement for retrofitting more than 50 percent of its school buses will be paid in the subsequent year based on a schedule to be determined by the commissioner, not to exceed two years.

(cf: P.L.1996, c.96, s.2)

3. Section 3 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.3) is amended to read as follows:

3. [Within] No later than 60 days [of] after the effective date of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.) (now pending before the Legislature as this bill), each agency, board of education, nonpublic school and school bus contractor shall submit to the Commissioner of Education a list of all vehicles, as defined in section 1 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1), that are used to transport students on the effective date of P.L. 1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.1 et seq.) August 6, 1996, including: the vehicle serial number; the year, make and license plate number as noted on the vehicle registration; and an indication as to whether the vehicle is currently equipped with a crossing control arm.

The owners of such vehicles may apply for reimbursement through the Department of Education in accordance with section 2 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.2) on an application form as the Commissioner of Education shall prescribe. The application shall be accompanied by a receipt for the purchase of the crossing control arm through an authorized dealer.

(cf: P.L.1996, c.96, s.3)

4. Section 4 of P.L.1996, c.96 (C.39:3B-1.4) is repealed.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill amends the statute, approved on August 6, 1996, that requires the installation of crossing control arms on school buses to clarify that the law applies to buses transporting nonpublic as well as public school pupils. The bill also specifies that the requirement applies to any agency operating school buses and to those school buses which were originally designed to carry 10 or more passengers. Under the bill, school bus operators would have 60 days after the bill is signed into law to provide the Commissioner of Education with a list
of vehicles and an indication as to whether each vehicle is currently equipped with a crossing control arm. A section of the statute requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules and regulations has been determined to be unnecessary and is repealed.