



MINNESOTA SAFETY COUNCIL

 Chapter of the National Safety Council

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Members of the Minnesota State Legislature
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN

Regarding: School Bus Stop Arm Camera Legislation

Dear Senator/Representative:

The Minnesota Safety Council is a member-based, private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injuries - a leading cause of death, disability and economic loss. We offer traffic programs for the workplace and the larger community, including defensive driving classes for mature drivers and interactive online programs for teens.

We provide numerous resources and programs to support safety at home and in the community and serve as the lead agency for Safe Kids Minnesota, a statewide network of organizations involved in preventing childhood injury.

We are writing to you today to provide our strong support for SF 584/HF 2172, authored by Senator Newman and Representative Wolgamott. The proposed legislation will allow stop-arm cameras to be installed on Minnesota school busses to provide our public safety officers with the extra enforcement tools they need to significantly reduce the number of violations at our bus stops.

In a staggering reflection of how serious of a problem this is, the annual Minnesota Department of Public Safety survey of bus drivers across the state revealed in 2019 that out of 2,376 school bus drivers on our roads, 625 reported violations to law enforcement. This is unacceptable and needs to stop now.

In Minnesota, law enforcement has the ability to issue citations to drivers who pass a stopped school bus when the bus driver can provide a description of the vehicle. Stop arm cameras give bus drivers the resource to identify a vehicle that illegally passes a stopped school bus. With the evidence of an illegal stop arm violation captured on camera, law enforcement can issue a citation.

At least 22 states have enacted stop-arm laws to save the lives of our children and ticket motorists who pass stopped school busses and put our kids' lives in danger. It is our belief that if this legislation is adopted, it will provide the opportunity to empower local school districts and law enforcement to take advantage of this proven technology that will help to keep our students safe.

We urge your full support of SF 584/HF 2172. We believe adoption of this legislation will make each day safer for the children in our state.

Thank you for your consideration of this life-saving legislation, and your leadership in ensuring our students are safe.

Paul Aasen
President
Minnesota Safety Council