



*In the City Council, October 19th, in the Year Two Thousand and Seventeen*  
Upon the recommendation of Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra and Councilor James Nash  
and the Transportation and Parking Commission.

## **R-17.412**

### **A RESOLUTION**

#### **IN SUPPORT OF BILLS S.2100 AND H.1900 CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF SCHOOL CHILDREN EMBARKING AND DISEMBARKING SCHOOL BUSES**

- WHEREAS, over one third of Northampton school children rely on school buses and vans to safely transport them to and from school.
- WHEREAS, ridership on Northampton's school buses and vans should be encouraged because they are statistically the safest way for children to travel to and from school, and one school bus can carry the equivalent capacity as 36 cars, greatly reducing carbon emissions and helping ease traffic throughout the city and congestion and parking issues around our schools.
- WHEREAS, school bus and van drivers are trained extensively to ensure children's safety when riding the bus, the most dangerous time for children is when embarking or disembarking the bus.
- WHEREAS, Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 90, Section 14 mandates all motorists in both directions of traffic to stop and remain stopped for all school buses and vans with flashing red lights and stop arms extended, and all 50 states have laws prohibiting the passing of a stopped and engaged school bus.
- WHEREAS, sampling by the National Association of State Directors of Public Transportation Services' (NASDPT) indicates that in the 2016-17 180-day school year, there were an estimated 14 million stop arm violations by private motorists in the United States. In the six years that NASDPT has been conducting the survey, that number has been estimated to be between 13 and 16 million annual stop arm violations.

WHEREAS, in Northampton there are many school buses and vans transporting students throughout the city at the same time, making it infeasible for police enforcement of stop arm violations on each of these routes.

WHEREAS, S.2100 and H.1900 would enable municipalities with school bus violation detection monitoring systems to enforce violations against the owner of a motor vehicle whose vehicle failed to stop and remain stopped for a school bus with its stop arm extended.

WHEREAS, any school bus or van using a violation detection monitoring system would be required to clearly post on the vehicle a warning sign that the system is in use, the system would detect stop arm violations only and from the back of the vehicle, and the privacy of the passengers, including the operator, and the contents of the vehicle are protected.

WHEREAS, S.2100 and H.1900 require a municipality to accept its provisions by vote of the legislative body, subject to the charter of the municipality and any contract with a manufacturer or vendor of a school bus violation detection monitoring system would require a vote of a majority of the school committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Northampton, Massachusetts is committed to Northampton children's safety on and off school buses, and the reduction of stop arm violations in our community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support S.2100 and H.1900 Concerning the Safety of School Children Embarking and Disembarking School Buses and agree with Rep. William Straus and the other sponsors of H1900 that "the deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to safeguard student safety." We ask that the both Senate and House Ways and Means committees move forward with hearings and passage forward for action in the legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we commend State Representative Peter V. Kocot for his stated support of H.1900 and his commitment to aiding its passage.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Administrative Assistant to the City Council shall cause a copy of this resolution to be sent to MA Senate President Stanley Rosenberg; MA State Representative Peter V. Kocot; the co-sponsors of S.2100 State Senators Kathleen O'Connor Ives, Linda Dean Campbell, Marc R. Pacheco and Daniel J. Hunt; the co-sponsors of H.1900 State Representatives William M. Straus, Randy Hunt, José F. Tosado, Kevin J. Kuros; Chair of the MA Senate Ways and Means Committee, Sen. Karen E. Spilka; and Chair of the MA House Ways and Means Committee Jeffrey Sánchez.