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A M E N D M E N T

Offered in the SENATE

TO: SB 375

Page 1, line 13, after "transporting":

Delete "school-age"

Insert "school [SCHOOL-AGE]"

Page 1, line 17, after "commissioner.":

Insert "In this subsection, "classroom studies" means curriculum studies that take place in a school building."

SB 375. Licensing of school bus drivers

SB 375 corrects a problem created in 1986 when the legislature imposed stricter requirements for school bus drivers and the ensuing regulations encompassed all van drivers regardless of the purpose of transportation of children. Many school districts are adversely affected, particularly in smaller communities as those schools frequently use "school activity vans" driven by a variety of staff, coaches or teachers. To comply, all would have to undergo the training and other requirements which can be costly to these districts.

"bus" is defined in existing Department of Public Safety regulations 13 AAC 40.010 (6): "bus" means every motor vehicle designed for carrying more than 10 passengers and used primarily for the transportation of passengers, and every motor vehicle designed and used for the transportation of persons for compensation, except a taxicab or school bus".

By that definition, current law requires that a driver of a van designed to carry more than ten passengers must possess a school bus drivers license. In order to comply, the driver must:

1. Complete a state approved school bus driver training course.
2. Supply the department of public safety with sufficient information to complete national criminal records check and background check.
3. Pass a written and road exam.
4. Undergo a health physical .

Additionally, many volunteer organizations are currently affected, including organizations such as ski clubs, girl scouts, and little leagues.

SB 375 more clearly defines that school bus driver's licenses are required only when transporting children to and from school, or when a "school bus" is being used to transport children to and from school. All others would not be required to obtain a "school bus" driver's license.

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: An Act relating to licensing
school bus drivers.
Sponsor: Fahrenkamp
Requestor: Senate Transportation

Agency Affected: Public Safety
BRU: Motor Vehicles
Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

No fiscal impact on this department.

JML
2/8/88

Prepared by: Bill Brown Phone: 465-4335
Division: Motor Vehicles Date: 2-8-88

Approved by Commissioner: Paul Houtz, Dep. Comm. Date: 2-10-88
Agency: Public Safety

- Distribution (by preparer):
- Legislative Finance
 - Legislative Sponsor
 - Requestor
 - Office of Management and Budget
 - Impacted Agency(ies)

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Regulations on School Bus Driver Training
DRAFT

The following regulations were adopted by the State Board of Education at its regular meeting held on August 17, 1987:

4 AAC 27 is amended by adding new sections to read:

4 AAC 27.200. APPROVED SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING COURSES. (a) Upon application by a district on forms prescribed by the department, the department may approve a school bus driver training course that is required by a pupil transportation contract which was awarded pursuant to 4 AAC 27.085. Courses approved under this subsection are approved until the expiration of the transportation contract under which the approval was made.

(b) Upon application on forms prescribed by the department and until June 30, 1988, the department may approve a school bus driver training course which includes at least 10 hours of training in the following subjects: pre-trip inspection; seat and mirror adjustment; defensive driving; driving skills; loading and unloading procedures; student management; and safety and emergency procedures. Courses approved under this subsection are approved until June 30, 1988 unless otherwise authorized in writing by the department.

(c) Upon application on forms prescribed by the department, the department may approve a school bus driver training course that:

(1) is conducted by a school bus driver training instructor certified under 4 AAC 27.210;

(2) meets the minimum standard training requirements of 4 AAC 27.220; and

(3) except as otherwise authorized in writing, by the department, follows the Minimum Course Content for Pre-Service Training of Alaska School Bus Drivers, 1987 Edition, issued by the department.

(d) Courses approved under subsection (c) are approved for a period of three years.

4 AAC 27.210. CERTIFICATION OF INSTRUCTORS. (a) The department will certify a person holding a school bus driver permit as a school bus driver training instructor if the person:

(1) has a minimum of two years' school bus driving experience; and

(2) satisfactorily completes a school bus driver training instructor certification program conducted by the department.

(b) A school bus driver training instructor certificate issued under (a) of this section expires three years from the date of issuance or whenever the holder fails to continue to hold a school bus driver permit, whichever comes first.

(c) A certificate issued under (a) of this section may be renewed any number of times if the holder submits an application on a form prescribed by the department and

(1) has conducted at least one state approved training course annually during the life of the certificate; or

(2) has prior approval of the department to enter and satisfactorily completes a school bus driver training instructor refresher program conducted by the department.

4 AAC 27.220. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVER TRAINING COURSES. (a) In order for a person to be certified by a department approved instructor as having met the requirements of a school bus driver training course approved under 4 AAC 27.200(c), the person must successfully:

- (1) identify the major mechanical component parts of a school bus;
- (2) complete a pre-trip inspection of a school bus;
- (3) adjust the driver's seat of a school bus so that all controls can be reached easily;
- (4) adjust the mirrors of a school bus for optimum visibility;
- (5) demonstrate starting and stopping the bus smoothly using proper coordination of accelerator, clutch where applicable, and brakes;
- (6) stop a school bus a specified distance from another object or point using over the hood, rear and curb reference points;
- (7) where applicable, shift gears on a moving school bus in a manner which provides a safe ride to passengers and avoids damage and unnecessary wear to the bus components;
- (8) where applicable, demonstrate the use of shifting in slowing and stopping the bus;
- (9) turn a corner in a school bus while keeping the bus in the correct lane of traffic;
- (10) back up a school bus in a straight line, and turn the bus around by backing into a side street under conditions of both ample and limited space;
- (11) explain and demonstrate defensive driving skills which may help prevent accidents in school buses in spite of incorrect actions of others;
- (12) demonstrate procedures for properly loading and unloading students;
- (13) explain techniques for managing the behavior of pupils on a school bus in a positive way;

- (14) explain proper actions to take during driving emergencies;
- (15) locate and explain how to use emergency equipment found on school buses;
- (16) explain and demonstrate procedures for safely positioning a school bus on a road after a mechanical breakdown or emergency situation;
- (17) demonstrate procedures for safely evacuating passengers of a school bus; and
- (18) demonstrate procedures for properly crossing railroad tracks in a school bus.

4 AAC 27.230. ISSUANCE OF SCHOOL BUS DRIVER CERTIFICATES; RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS. (a) An instructor certified under 4 AAC 27.210 may issue a certificate certifying that a person has completed a state approved school bus training course under AS 14.07.020(a)(14) only if the person has completed a course approved under 4 AAC 27.200 using the Minimum Course Content for Pre-Service Training of Alaska School Bus Drivers, 1987 Edition, issued by the department, and has demonstrated to the instructor's satisfaction that the driver has met each of the minimum standards set forth in 4 AAC 27.220.,

(b) An instructor must keep records available for inspection by the department for a period of three years for each person to whom he or she has given instruction in school bus driving indicating:

(1) the objectives on which training was given, including when the training was given, and the amount of training given on each objective; and

(2) evaluation sheets, dated and signed by the instructor and driver, documenting that the driver has met each of the minimum standards set forth in 4 AAC 27.220.

(c) The instructor must furnish a duplicate of each certificate issued under (a) of this section to the department within 5 days of its issuance.

4 AAC 27.240. REVOCATION OF INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATE. A certificate issued under 4 AAC 27.210 may be revoked for the following reasons:

(a) fraudulent certification of training;

(b) failure to follow department regulations and instructions concerning school bus driver training;

(c) negligence in driving or instructional techniques;

(d) revocation of school bus driver permit;

(e) failure to properly document training as required by 4 AAC 27.230; or

(f) willful failure to submit duplicate certificate to the department as required by 4 AAC 27.230.

Fairbanks North Star Borough
School District

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Interior Delegation Meeting

December 14, 1987

Interior Delegation

Sen. Jack Coghill
Sen. Betsy Fahrenkamp
Sen. Ken Fanning

Rep. Mark Boyer
Rep. Mike Davis
Rep. Steve Frank
Rep. Niilo Koponen
Rep. Mike Miller

Fairbanks School Board

Bonnie Brody, President

Mike Kramer
Jerry McBeath
Gene Redden
Tony Barnhill, Post Rep.

Walt Schlotfeldt
Karl Schroeder
Andy Warwick
Mike Griffin, Base Rep.

Linda Lowery, Student Rep.

Rick Cross, Superintendent

SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS' LICENSES

POSITION PAPER AS 28.15.046(A)

I. Statutory requirement

Effective Sept 1, 1987 a person may not drive a school bus, or a bus transporting school age children, until that person has been issued a school bus driver's license.

II. Impact on District

Since the new licensing requirements apply to persons driving any bus transporting school age children, many more people are required to possess school bus driver's licenses than in the past. Anyone who drives school age children in a vehicle capable of transporting 11 or more students must now obtain a school bus driver's license.

This change impacts primarily the extra curricular programs of the District. It also effects the use of the District van by FAJHS staff to transport students. District activities will be impacted as follows:

1. Schools may not rent vans to transport teams to and from events unless the sponsor/driver possesses a valid school bus driver's license. This applies to renting vans in Fairbanks to drive to another town. It also applies to renting vans in Anchorage (or any other town) to travel around town after flying from Fairbanks.

This restriction on the use of vans will increase the cost of transporting teams. Teams will have to either rent smaller capacity vans, rent school buses, or arrange for sponsors to obtain bus driver's licenses. Each of those alternatives increases activity costs, possibly to the point of making it too expensive to travel out of district for certain groups.

2. Schools may no longer charter buses from common carriers (e.g. Westours, Sturgeon, etc.) unless the drivers of those motor coaches possess school bus driver's licenses. These drivers do not generally possess school bus driver licenses, so the district cannot presently use common carriers on long haul charters.

3. The FAJHS must either lower the capacity of its van (presently a 15 passenger van) to less than 10 passenger capacity, or the staff at FAJHS must obtain school bus driver's permits.

III. Potential Solutions

The District has several options available to address the problems created by these new licensing requirements. They are as follows:

1. Hire all transportation of students to school bus contractors.
2. Arrange for all coaches/sponsors travelling with students to obtain school bus driver's permits.
3. Only rent/lease vehicles of 10 passenger or less.
4. Pursue amendment to AS 28.15.046(a) that will change the persons required to possess a school bus driver's license.

The district is presently using a combination of alternatives 1-3 in an effort to comply with the new law. This changes the way students transportation has occurred in the past, making it both more expensive and more difficult to arrange.

IV. Recommended Solution

The alternative of amending the law should be considered. The new law, designed to standardize school bus driver training requirements, has created a new class of persons required to obtain this license. These people will probably never drive a yellow school bus, but are still required to possess a school bus driver's permit.

To suggest that only drivers of school buses should need school bus driver's licenses is not unreasonable. The District supports a change in the law that will limit the application of the statute to those drivers who actually transport students on school buses.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Position Paper - SB 375
2/10/88

The Department of Education strongly supports training and licensing of drivers who transport large groups of students to or from school or school activities.

We agree with the requirements of this bill for training and special licensing of drivers who transport school children to or from school or school activities on school buses, or who transport school age children to or from school on buses.

While the department takes no position on the intent of the bill to delete training and special licensing of drivers of non-school buses transporting school age children on activity trips, we believe that school districts should provide these drivers with training in at least the following areas: pre-trip inspection, defensive driving, emergency situations, and passenger management.

William G. Demmert

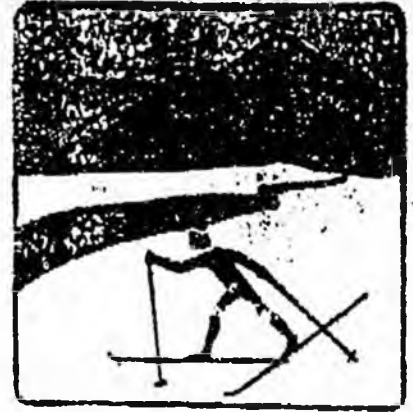
William G. Demmert, Commissioner

SALCHA SKI CLUB

P.O. Box 140055

Salcha, Alaska 99714

(907) 488-3987 or 488-3012



February 10, 1988

Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp
Alaska State Senate
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

I am writing to express the complete support of our organization (all 114 members) for your Senate Bill 375. This bill will remedy the transportation problems caused by current regulations which have forced us to leave behind team members who would ordinarily have travelled with us to ski races in Anchorage.

As an organization on a limited budget, run completely by volunteer help, we do not have the time or financial resources to obtain school bus driver's licenses for our drivers. Nor do we think that such licensing would improve the quality or safety-consciousness of our drivers.

Would you please pass along this letter to other members of the senate and also the Department of Transportation so that they will know of our problems with current regulations and our support for your Senate Bill 375. Thank you.

Sincerely,

James F. Ostlind

James F. Ostlind, Executive Director
Salcha Ski Club

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