

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS31412 / H0610

This legislation updates Idaho Code § 49-1422 and has three specific components. Firstly, it increases the fines associated with illegally passing school buses. Drivers in Idaho have increased the frequency of passing school buses during the boarding and disembarking of children, and the current deployment of flashing lights and the stop arm is not always effective enough. Increasing the fines will be a notable deterrent against unsafe driving behavior. Secondly, this legislation amends the charge for a first-time offense from a misdemeanor to an infraction while maintaining that the second, and any subsequent stop arm convictions, remain a misdemeanor. Currently, the requirement of the defendant for a first-time stop arm offense is to make an initial court appearance to plead guilty, a second appearance for a court trial, and a third appearance for sentencing. Reducing the initial charge to an infraction allows the defendant the ability to resolve the fines imposed under this subsection online, or by phone or email. Finally, the draft grants the Department of Education administrative rights to the School Bus Camera Fund. In supporting the efforts to bring more awareness to the seriousness of school bus stop violations, and to support local law enforcement agencies in securing convictions of such offenses, moneys in the fund will be appropriated for the purpose of school bus stop arm cameras, software, equipment, and training.

FISCAL NOTE

This legislation causes no additional cost to the Department of Education for the disbursement of Stop Arm Fund moneys. Based on an established formula, this change will mean an increase to revenue from fines, which are collected and distributed to the State Treasurer (for the Peace Officers Standards and Training Fund), the Highway Distribution Account, the District Court Fund, and the Public School Income Fund.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).