



ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY

March 6, 2026

The Honorable Cristina Castro, Chair
The Honorable Bill Cunningham, Vice-Chair
The Honorable John F. Curran, Minority Spokesperson
Senate Executive Committee
Illinois Senate
State Capitol, 401 S. Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Chair Castro, Vice Chair Cunningham and Minority Spokesperson Curran:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs, supports enactment of a provision in Senate Bill (SB) 3195 to update Section 11-1414(e) of the Illinois Code. The other provisions in the bill are outside the scope of our organization's mission. This upgrade would improve safety for vulnerable school children.

In 2024, there were an overall estimated 1,208¹ traffic fatalities in Illinois according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which is a 21 percent increase since 2015.² From 2014 to 2023 fatalities among vulnerable road users (VRUs) increased as well with a 62 percent rise in pedestrian fatalities.³ In addition to the physical and emotional burden, traffic crashes exact a financial toll. Traffic crashes cause nearly \$14 billion of economic damage to Illinois annually which is equivalent to a "crash tax" of \$1,103 per resident, according to a 2019 analysis.⁴ When updated for inflation alone, in 2026, costs would equate to approximately \$18.1 billion.⁵

Drivers illegally passing a stopped school bus is a major issue. Nationally there are an estimated 39 million illegal school bus passings each year, putting children in danger during the most vulnerable part of their trip—the moments they are boarding or exiting the bus.⁶ The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has identified school bus stop arm cameras as an effective strategy to reduce violations and enhance student safety.⁷

Under current law drivers on roads with four or more lanes and at least two lanes in each direction of travel are exempted from the requirement to stop for a school bus picking up or dropping off school children. SB 3195 enhances safety by narrowing the exemption to roads with a raised median or physical barrier dividing the road and therefore requires drivers on both sides of an undivided road with four or more lanes to stop for school buses.

Advocates urges you to support upgrading Section 11-1414(e) to improve safety for precious school children. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

cc: Senate Executive Committee members

¹ Traffic Safety Facts: Crash Stats, Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities in 2024, NHTSA, April 2025, DOT HS 813 710, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813710>.

² State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.

³ State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.

⁴ The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.

⁵ CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, January 2019 to January 2026 dollars, available [here](#).
⁶ National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, 2024, National School Bus Illegal Passing Survey. NASDPTS. Available at <https://www.nasdpts.org/stop-arm-violations>.
⁷ National Transportation Safety Board Safety Recommendation H-20-012, available at <https://data.nts.gov/carol-main-public/sr-details/H-20-012>.