

SENATE BILL 500
By Atchley

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 55, Chapter 8, relative to buses transporting children.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 55-8-151, is amended by adding the following as a new subsection to be appropriately designated:

() (1) (A) The driver of a vehicle on a highway upon meeting or overtaking from either direction any youth bus which has stopped on the highway for the purpose of receiving or discharging passengers shall stop the vehicle before reaching such youth bus, and the driver shall not proceed until such youth bus resumes motion or is signaled by the youth bus driver to proceed or the visual signals on the bus are no longer actuated.

(B) The provisions of this subsection shall not apply unless the youth bus has the same type of safety equipment indicating the bus has stopped as is required for school buses.

(2) All motor vehicles owned by corporations or organizations used in transporting child passengers to and from child care centers in this state or to and from the activities of religious, charitable, scientific, educational, youth service or athletic institutions or organizations are required to be distinctly marked "Youth Bus" on the front and rear thereof in letters of not less than six inches (6") in height and so plainly written or printed and so arranged as to be legible to persons approaching such youth bus, whether traveling in the same or the opposite direction.

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(3) (A) The driver of a vehicle upon a highway with separate roadways needs not stop upon meeting or passing a youth bus which is on a different roadway or when upon a controlled access highway and the youth bus is stopped in a loading zone which is a part of or adjacent to such highway and where pedestrians are not permitted to cross the roadway.

(B) For the purpose of subdivision (b)(3)(A), "separate roadways" means roadways divided by an intervening space which is not suitable to vehicular traffic.

(4) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, the youth bus driver is required to stop such youth bus on the right-hand side of the road or highway, and the driver shall cause the bus to remain stationary and the visual stop signs on the bus actuated until all passengers who should be discharged from the bus have been so discharged and until all passengers whose destination causes them to cross the road or highway at that place have negotiated such crossing.

(5) Any person failing to comply with the requirements of this subsection, requiring motor vehicles to stop upon approaching youth buses, or violating any of the provisions of this subsection, commits a Class C misdemeanor.

(6) The commissioner of safety is authorized to promulgate rules to effectuate the purposes of this subsection in accord with the provisions of Title 4, Chapter 5. Such rules shall include qualifications and procedures for determining which organizations may employ youth buses and the type of any signals that may be appropriate.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997, the public welfare requiring it.

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