

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION-2026

Legislative Document

No. 2159

H.P. 1448

House of Representatives, January 13, 2026

**An Act to Require School Buses to Be Equipped with and to Use
School Bus Crossing Arms**

(AFTER DEADLINE)

(EMERGENCY)

Approved for introduction by a majority of the Legislative Council pursuant to Joint Rule 205.

Reference to the Committee on Transportation suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative GEIGER of Rockland.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, current law does not require school buses of model year 2020 or older to be equipped with a school bus crossing arm; and

Whereas, for those school buses that are equipped with a school bus crossing arm, current law does not require the school bus crossing arm to be activated while a school bus is receiving and discharging passengers; and

Whereas, requiring school bus crossing arms on all school buses and requiring the school bus crossing arm to be activated while a school bus is receiving and discharging passengers will result in greater safety for children who travel to and from school on school buses; and

Whereas, the safety of children is of paramount importance, and this legislation must take effect immediately to protect children; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 29-A MRSA §2302, sub-§1-A, as enacted by PL 2019, c. 413, §2, is amended to read:

1-A. School bus crossing arms. A school bus of model year 2021 or newer must be equipped with a school bus crossing arm.

Sec. 2. 29-A MRSA §2306-A is enacted to read:

§2306-A. Required use of school bus crossing arm

1. Required use. The operator of a school bus equipped with a school bus crossing arm shall activate the school bus crossing arm while the school bus is stopped to receive or discharge passengers.

2. Violation. A person commits a Class E crime if that person, while operating a school bus, fails to activate a school bus crossing arm as required by subsection 1.

3. Suspension. On conviction of an operator of failure to activate a school bus crossing arm, the Secretary of State shall revoke the operator's school bus operator endorsement issued pursuant to section 2303 for a period of not less than 2 years.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill requires all school buses to be equipped with a school bus crossing arm and requires the operator of a school bus to activate the school bus crossing arm while the bus is stopped to receive or discharge passengers. The bill provides that the penalty for not activating a school bus crossing arm is a Class E crime and requires the Secretary of State

1 to revoke the operator's endorsement to operate a school bus for a period of not less than 2
2 years. The penalty is the same penalty that applies to failure of a school bus operator to
3 stop at a railroad track crossing.