
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 172 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY LANGERHOLC, YUDICHAK, REGAN, ARGALL, PHILLIPS-
HILL, STEFANO, SCAVELLO, DiSANTO, PITTMAN AND BROOKS,
SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

REFERRED TO TRANSPORTATION, SEPTEMBER 17, 2021

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States and the United States
2 Department of Transportation to take action on the nationwide
3 school bus driver shortage.

4 WHEREAS, Every day, school bus drivers have the
5 responsibility of safely transporting this Commonwealth's most
6 precious cargo, more than 1.5 million children, to and from
7 school; and

8 WHEREAS, The ratio of school bus drivers to students
9 transported has decreased since 2013, when the number of
10 licensed school bus drivers in this Commonwealth was at the
11 highest level in the last 10 years; and

12 WHEREAS, Federal and State laws and regulations require
13 school bus operators to pass knowledge and driving tests and
14 demonstrate their capability of safely operating a loaded school
15 bus; and

16 WHEREAS, These requirements lead to a process that takes a
17 substantial amount of time, approximately 12 weeks, before a
18 school bus driver is qualified to drive students; and

1 WHEREAS, While Federal and State laws and regulations serve
2 as safeguards to assure the safe transport of school children,
3 the "under-the-hood" training requirement for commercial
4 driver's licenses has proven to be a significant barrier to
5 entry into the school bus industry; and

6 WHEREAS, The "under-the-hood" training, which is tailored for
7 large commercial vehicles, requires a school bus driver to
8 identify certain parts of the school bus engine and remedy them
9 in the event of an issue; and

10 WHEREAS, The "under-the-hood" inspection is not applicable
11 for school bus drivers, since their pretrip inspection does not
12 require inspecting items in the engine bay, and in the event of
13 a breakdown, a school bus driver remains on the bus while
14 another individual addresses the mechanical issues; and

15 WHEREAS, Across this Commonwealth, school districts and
16 school bus companies have been struggling to hire and retain an
17 adequate number of qualified school bus drivers; and

18 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the shortage,
19 at times resulting in school districts attempting to borrow
20 school bus drivers from neighboring school districts, to
21 significantly modify or delay bus schedules or ultimately having
22 no choice but to cancel an entire school day; and

23 WHEREAS, The number of licensed school bus drivers in this
24 Commonwealth is declining, while the number of students needing
25 daily school bus transportation continues to increase; therefore
26 be it

27 RESOLVED, That the Senate urge the Congress of the United
28 States and the United States Department of Transportation to
29 take action on the nationwide school bus driver shortage; and be
30 it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States and the
2 United States Department of Transportation consider legislation
3 or regulations that would ease the barriers to recruitment and
4 retention of school bus drivers, while preserving the safety of
5 the children on the bus, the general motoring public and
6 pedestrians; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States and the
8 United States Department of Transportation consider
9 investigating the feasibility of developing a commercial
10 driver's license that is specific to school bus drivers in order
11 to reduce irrelevant training requirements; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
13 the President of the United States, the Majority and Minority
14 Leaders of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the
15 Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives,
16 the chair and ranking member of the Commerce Committee of the
17 United States Senate, the chair and ranking member of the
18 Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the United States
19 House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States
20 Department of Transportation, the Administrator of the Federal
21 Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Pennsylvania
22 Congressional Delegation.