



State of Wisconsin
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3660/1
EVM:cdc

2023 SENATE BILL 354

July 13, 2023 - Introduced by Senators JAMES, HESSELBEIN, BALLWEG, ROYS and SPREITZER, cosponsored by Representatives S. JOHNSON, PENTERMAN, ANDRACA, CONSIDINE, JOERS, OHNSTAD and SINICKI. Referred to Committee on Transportation and Local Government.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 343.16 (3) (a); and *to create* 38.04 (4) (e) 9., 115.28 (11) (h),
2 343.16 (1) (a) 2. am., 343.16 (3) (c) and 343.71 (5) (i) of the statutes; **relating**
3 **to:** driver education and testing related to school bus safety.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, most operator's licenses issued by the Department of Transportation must be renewed every eight years. In general, an applicant for renewal of an operator's license must pass an eyesight test and have his or her photograph taken. Under this bill, an applicant for renewal must also complete a verbal school bus safety examination that includes a test of the applicant's awareness of the hazards posed by other motor vehicles to school buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses and of the statutes that require motorists to stop when a school bus is displaying flashing lights. The applicant's performance on the examination does not affect whether or not the applicant's license is renewed and, to the extent feasible, DOT must ensure that the examination does not extend the time necessary to complete the renewal procedure.

Currently, applicants for an initial operator's license must generally complete a knowledge test and driving skills test. The bill specifies that the knowledge test administered to these applicants must include material testing the applicant's knowledge of the hazards posed by other motor vehicles to school buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses and of the provisions of the statutes that require motorists to stop when a school bus is displaying flashing lights.

Also under the bill, driver education courses offered by school districts, technical colleges, and licensed private driver schools must provide instruction in the

SENATE BILL 354

the hazards posed by other motor vehicles to school buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses and with the provisions of the statutes that require motorists to stop when a school bus is displaying flashing lights.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 38.04 (4) (e) 9. of the statutes is created to read:

2 38.04 (4) (e) 9. Acquaints each student with the hazards posed by other motor
3 vehicles to school buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses
4 and with the provisions of s. 346.48.

5 **SECTION 2.** 115.28 (11) (h) of the statutes is created to read:

6 115.28 (11) (h) Acquaint each student with the hazards posed by other motor
7 vehicles to school buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses
8 and with the provisions of s. 346.48.

9 **SECTION 3.** 343.16 (1) (a) 2. am. of the statutes is created to read:

10 343.16 (1) (a) 2. am. The knowledge test administered to applicants for initial
11 issuance of an operator's license shall include material testing the applicant's
12 knowledge of the hazards posed by other motor vehicles to school buses and
13 passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses and of the provisions of s.
14 346.48.

15 **SECTION 4.** 343.16 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

16 343.16 (3) (a) Except as provided in s. 343.165 (4) (d), the department shall
17 examine every applicant for the renewal of an operator's license once every 8 years.
18 The department may institute a method of selecting the date of renewal so that such
19 examination shall be required for each applicant for renewal of a license to gain a

SENATE BILL 354

1 uniform rate of examinations. Subject to ~~par.~~ pars. (ag) and (am), the examination
2 shall consist of a test of eyesight and a school bus safety test under par. (c). The
3 department shall make provisions for giving such examinations at examining
4 stations in each county to all applicants for an operator's license. The person to be
5 examined shall appear at the examining station nearest the person's place of
6 residence or at such time and place as the department designates in answer to an
7 applicant's request.

8 (ag) In lieu of examination of eyesight, the applicant may present or mail to the
9 department a report of examination of the applicant's eyesight by an
10 ophthalmologist, optometrist, or physician licensed to practice medicine. The report
11 shall be based on an examination made not more than 3 months prior to the date it
12 is submitted. The report shall be on a form furnished and in the form required by
13 the department. The department shall decide whether, in each case, the eyesight
14 reported is sufficient to meet the current eyesight standards.

15 **SECTION 5.** 343.16 (3) (c) of the statutes is created to read:

16 343.16 (3) (c) Prior to renewal, the department shall administer and the
17 applicant shall complete a verbal school bus safety examination that includes a test
18 of the applicant's awareness of the hazards posed by other motor vehicles to school
19 buses and passengers loading onto or unloading from school buses and with the
20 provisions of s. 346.48. The department may not consider the performance of the
21 applicant on the examination under this paragraph in the determination of whether
22 or not to renew the applicant's operator's license. To the extent feasible, the
23 department shall ensure that the examination under this paragraph does not extend
24 the time necessary to complete the license renewal procedure.

25 **SECTION 6.** 343.71 (5) (i) of the statutes is created to read:

