



Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation

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The Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation (VAPT) respectfully offers the following resolution in opposition to Senate Bill No. 557 as currently written.

WHEREAS: The pupil transportation departments of the local school divisions throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia are dedicated to providing the safest and most efficient transportation for all students; and

WHEREAS: In the Commonwealth of Virginia, approximately 16,000 yellow school buses transport an estimated 800,000 children to and from school each day. Each year, these buses travel approximately 200,946,422 miles; and

WHEREAS: Parents trust us with the lives of their children and we owe them and their students the best trained drivers that we can employ, and

WHEREAS: The bus driver is personally responsible for conducting a physical check of various vehicle systems such as, brakes, tires, lights, steering, etc., to ensure that all systems meets requirements for safe and proper operation, and

WHEREAS: Drivers are responsible not only for the discipline of the children on the bus, but also medical and or other emergencies that may arise while travelling to and from school, and

WHEREAS: There are many bus drivers that must attend to those students with special needs, which requires additional specialized training, and

WHEREAS: Selecting and training men and women to be school bus drivers is an important task, and

WHEREAS: School bus drivers must be knowledgeable about school transportation have excellent driving skills, mechanical knowledge, be a disciplinarian and health provider, and

WHEREAS: School bus drivers need to be in great physical and mental health, and

WHEREAS: The scant amount of time for training recommended in this bill, is nowhere near the amount of time necessary to train a competent driver to safely transport children, and

WHEREAS: Training is expensive, but reducing that training would be to the detriment of the students that ride the school bus. There is not one person in the Commonwealth of Virginia that transports students who would like to see a newspaper headline “Students killed because of ill trained bus driver”; and

WHEREAS: The 48 hours of training presently in place, only begins to give trainers an idea of how an applicant will perform behind the wheel of a school bus with children. Not everyone can handle the stress of driving with children; and

WHEREAS: Being a professional school bus driver is all about safety and training. Because of the precious cargo that ride school buses, there can never be enough training; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED: The Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation does hereby oppose Senate Bill No. 557, a bill to amend and reenact section 22.1 – 181 and 46.2-339 of the Code of Virginia that would reduce the number of hours required for new bus driver trainees and those that already have a CDL driving other large vehicles.

Given under my hand this 2nd day of February in the year two thousand eighteen.

Michael Ashby,

Chairman, VAPT Legislative Committee

