



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

Fiscal Note 2023 Biennium

Bill # HB0267

Title: Improve school bus safety laws

Primary Sponsor: Duram, Neil

Status: As Introduced

- Significant Local Gov Impact
 Needs to be included in HB 2
 Technical Concerns
 Included in the Executive Budget
 Significant Long-Term Impacts
 Dedicated Revenue Form Attached

FISCAL SUMMARY

	<u>FY 2022</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2023</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2024</u> <u>Difference</u>	<u>FY 2025</u> <u>Difference</u>
Expenditures:				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenue:				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Impact-General Fund Balance:	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Description of fiscal impact: HB 267 allows for some enhancements to equipment that may be added to school buses in order to provide additional protection for children crossing roadways to/from buses for boarding/exiting buses. There is no fiscal impact to the state from HB 267.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Assumptions:

Office of Public Instruction

- Allowed enhancements to school buses per HB 267 include extended stop arms with flashing lights that partially obstruct the roadway. Also, HB 267 allows for video recording equipment to be installed on a bus to record vehicles passing in violation of the statute requiring motorists to stop for school buses that are loading or discharging children. A report of such a violation must be reported to the sheriff's office and the report must be investigated by a peace officer within 30 days. The bill also adds a new misdemeanor infraction for overtaking a stopped school bus on the right side of the school bus and provides for a fine up to \$1,000 and/or imprisonment for up to 6 months for violations.

2. The bill requires school boards to approve any bus stop where a child must cross a roadway when boarding or exiting. The bill also requires the addition of a sign on the rear of the bus in 8” high letters warning of the penalty for violation of a new prohibition against overtaking a school bus on the righthand side.
3. School bus standards are established by the Board of Public Education in ARM 10.64.301. Passage of this bill will require modifications to the ARM.
4. Only the requirement of a new sign on the rear of school buses is mandatory.
5. There is a new requirement that school boards approve any bus stops where children must cross a roadway to board or exit a bus and an extended stop arm must be installed on any bus making a stop at this point. However, in some of these cases the extended arm may already be present. It is also possible to reroute to avoid the crossing situation. As a result, there are no hard costs that can be attributed to this bill.
6. The OPI estimates there are 1,500 school buses in operation to transport pupils in Montana.
7. The cost of installing an illuminated extended stop arm is estimated to be \$3,200 each. If this bill results in 25% of the operating buses to have this item added, the statewide cost would be \$1,200,000. This would be a cost absorbed by districts or transportation providers.
8. The bill adds a requirement for each school bus transporting children be equipped at the rear with a plainly visible sign that warns drivers of the violation and penalty for overtaking a stopped bus on the righthand side. The cost of installing a rear sign in 8” letters is estimated to be \$50. Adding this sign to all operating buses will cost school districts \$75,000. This would be a cost absorbed by districts or transportation providers.
9. HB 267 modifies section 61-8-351, MCA, allowing a school district to install and operate a camera on the exterior of a school bus for the purpose of recording images of motor vehicles that are in violation of overtaking a school bus which is stopped for the purpose of receiving or discharging school children.
10. The video recording may be used to substantiate a report made in association with the violation.

Department of Justice

11. The Department of Justice (DOJ) reviewed HB 267 and determined that there will be no fiscal impact to DOJ outside existing HB 2 resources.
12. HB267 creates two new violations but the DOJ has no statistics on potential violations in order to quantify possible new revenue to be received.

Board of Public Education

13. The Board of Public Education may have changes to the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) if the superintendent makes any recommendations to the board to change ARM. If the board adopts changes, there would be a cost of \$60 per page. This is a minimal adjustment and could be absorbed in the board’s current budget.

Effect on County or Other Local Revenues or Expenditures:

1. School districts would have to spend \$75,000 to install rear warning signs on school buses and possibly \$1.2 million to install extended stop arms.

Technical Notes:

1. It is not clear there will be sufficient space on the rear of every school bus for the new sign that is required.


 Sponsor's Initials

2-4-2021
 Date

KA
 Budget Director's Initials

2/2/21
 Date