

STATE OF NEW YORK

923

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 9, 2019

Introduced by Sens. YOUNG, ADDABBO, AKSHAR, BOYLE, FUNKE, HELMING, O'MARA, RITCHIE, SAVINO, SEPULVEDA, TEDISCO -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the education law and the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to authorizing the installation and use of safety cameras on school buses for the purpose of monitoring overtaking and passing of school bus violations

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 1604 of the education law is amended by adding a
2 new subdivision 43 to read as follows:

3 43. To pass, in the discretion of the trustees, a resolution authoriz-
4 ing the use of school bus cameras pursuant to section eleven hundred
5 eighteen of the vehicle and traffic law, provided that the trustees may
6 also enter into contracts with a third party for the installation,
7 administration, operation, notice processing, and maintenance of such
8 cameras, and for the sharing of revenue derived from such cameras pursu-
9 ant to section eleven hundred eighteen of the vehicle and traffic law,
10 provided that the purchase, lease, installation, operation and mainte-
11 nance, or any other costs associated with such cameras shall not be
12 considered an aidable expense pursuant to section thirty-six hundred
13 twenty-three-a of this chapter.

14 § 2. Section 1709 of the education law is amended by adding a new
15 subdivision 43 to read as follows:

16 43. To pass a resolution, in the discretion of the board, authorizing
17 the use of school bus cameras pursuant to section eleven hundred eigh-
18 teen of the vehicle and traffic law, provided that the board may also
19 enter into contracts with a third party for the installation, adminis-
20 tration, operation, notice processing, and maintenance of such cameras,
21 and for the sharing of revenue derived from such cameras pursuant to

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 section eleven hundred eighteen of the vehicle and traffic law, provided
2 that the purchase, lease, installation, operation and maintenance, or
3 any other costs associated with such cameras shall not be considered an
4 aidable expense pursuant to section thirty-six hundred twenty-three-a of
5 this chapter.

6 § 3. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section
7 1118 to read as follows:

8 § 1118. Owner liability for operator illegally overtaking or passing a
9 school bus. (a) 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each
10 board of education or trustees of a school district is hereby authorized
11 and empowered to adopt and amend a resolution establishing a school bus
12 safety camera program imposing monetary liability on the owner of a
13 vehicle for failure of an operator thereof to comply with section eleven
14 hundred seventy-four of this title. Such program shall empower a board
15 of education or school district or school bus transportation contractor
16 that has contracted with such school district to install school bus
17 safety cameras upon school buses operated by or contracted with such
18 district.

19 2. Such program shall utilize necessary technologies to ensure, to the
20 extent practicable, that photographs produced by such school bus safety
21 cameras shall not include images that identify the driver, the passen-
22 gers, or the contents of the vehicle. Provided, however, that no notice
23 of liability issued pursuant to this section shall be dismissed solely
24 because a photograph or photographs allow for the identification of the
25 contents of a vehicle, provided that such school district has made a
26 reasonable effort to comply with the provisions of this paragraph.

27 (b) In any school district which has adopted a resolution pursuant to
28 subdivision (a) of this section, the owner of a vehicle shall be liable
29 for a penalty imposed pursuant to this section if such vehicle was used
30 or operated with the permission of the owner, express or implied, in
31 violation of subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of
32 this title, and such violation is evidenced by information obtained from
33 a school bus safety camera; provided however that no owner of a vehicle
34 shall be liable for a penalty imposed pursuant to this section where the
35 operator of such vehicle has been convicted of the underlying violation
36 of subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title.

37 (c) For purposes of this section, "owner" shall have the meaning
38 provided in article two-B of this chapter. For purposes of this section,
39 "school bus safety camera" shall mean an automated photo monitoring
40 device affixed to the outside of a school bus and designated to detect
41 and store one or more images of motor vehicles that overtake or pass
42 school buses in violation of subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred
43 seventy-four of this title.

44 (d) No school district or school bus transportation contractor that
45 has installed cameras pursuant to this section shall access the images
46 from such cameras but shall provide, pursuant to an agreement with the
47 appropriate law enforcement agency or agencies, for the proper handling
48 and custody of such images for the forwarding of such images from such
49 cameras to a law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the area in
50 which the violation occurred for the purpose of imposing monetary
51 liability on the owner of a motor vehicle for illegally overtaking or
52 passing a school bus in violation of subdivision (a) of section eleven
53 hundred seventy-four of this title. After receipt of such images a
54 police officer shall inspect such images to determine whether a
55 violation of subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of
56 this title was committed. Upon such a finding a certificate, sworn to or

1 affirmed by an officer of such agency, or a facsimile thereof, based
2 upon inspection of photographs, microphotographs or other recorded
3 images produced by a school bus safety camera, shall be prima facie
4 evidence of the facts contained therein. Any photographs, microphoto-
5 graphs or other recorded images evidencing such a violation shall be
6 available for inspection in any proceeding to adjudicate the liability
7 for such violation.

8 (e) An owner found liable pursuant to this section for a violation of
9 subdivision (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title
10 shall be liable for a monetary penalty of two hundred fifty dollars.

11 (e-1) Payment of the monetary penalty imposed by subdivision (e) of
12 this section shall be payable to the municipality where the violation
13 occurred, provided however, the school district shall be entitled to a
14 portion of the monetary penalty that equals the cost to the school
15 district of purchasing and maintaining the cameras. Nothing herein shall
16 prevent the municipality from entering into a memorandum of understand-
17 ing with the school district to return an additional portion of such
18 penalty received to the school district.

19 (f) An imposition of liability under this section shall not be deemed
20 a conviction as an operator and shall not be made part of the operating
21 record of the person upon whom such liability is imposed nor shall it be
22 used for insurance purposes in the provision of motor vehicle insurance
23 coverage.

24 (g) 1. A notice of liability shall be sent by the respective law
25 enforcement agency by first class mail to each person alleged to be
26 liable as an owner for a violation of subdivision (a) of section eleven
27 hundred seventy-four of this title pursuant to this section. Personal
28 delivery on the owner shall not be required. A manual or automatic
29 record of mailing prepared in the ordinary course of business shall be
30 prima facie evidence of the facts contained therein.

31 2. A notice of liability shall contain the name and address of the
32 person alleged to be liable as an owner for a violation of subdivision
33 (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title pursuant to
34 this section, the registration number of the vehicle involved in such
35 violation, the location where such violation took place, the date and
36 time of such violation and the identification number of the camera which
37 recorded the violation or other document locator number.

38 3. The notice of liability shall contain information advising the
39 person charged of the manner and the time in which he may contest the
40 liability alleged in the notice. Such notice of liability shall also
41 contain a warning to advise the persons charged that failure to contest
42 in the manner and time provided shall be deemed an admission of liabil-
43 ity and that a default judgement may be entered thereon.

44 4. The notice of liability shall be prepared and mailed by the respec-
45 tive law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the location where
46 the violation occurred.

47 (h) Adjudication of the liability imposed upon owners by this section
48 shall be by a traffic violations bureau established pursuant to section
49 three hundred seventy of the general municipal law or, if there be none,
50 by the court having jurisdiction over traffic infractions, except that
51 any city which has established or designated an administrative tribunal
52 to hear and determine owner liability established by this article for
53 failure to comply with traffic-control indications shall use such tribu-
54 nal to adjudicate the liability imposed by this section.

55 (i) If an owner receives a notice of liability pursuant to this
56 section for any time period during which the vehicle was reported to a

1 police department as having been stolen, it shall be a valid defense to
2 an allegation of liability for a violation of subdivision (a) of section
3 eleven hundred seventy-four of this title pursuant to this section that
4 the vehicle had been reported to the police as stolen prior to the time
5 the violation occurred and had not been recovered by such time. For
6 purposes of asserting the defense provided by this subdivision it shall
7 be sufficient that a certified copy of the police report on the stolen
8 vehicle be sent by first class mail to the traffic violations bureau,
9 court having jurisdiction or parking violations bureau.

10 (j) Where the adjudication of liability imposed upon owners pursuant
11 to this section is by an administrative tribunal, traffic violations
12 bureau, or a court having jurisdiction, an owner who is a lessor of a
13 vehicle to which a notice of liability was issued pursuant to subdivi-
14 sion (g) of this section shall not be liable for the violation of subdivi-
15 sion (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title,
16 provided that he or she sends to the administrative tribunal, traffic
17 violations bureau, or court having jurisdiction a copy of the rental,
18 lease or other such contract document covering such vehicle on the date
19 of the violation, with the name and address of the lessee clearly legi-
20 ble, within thirty-seven days after receiving notice from the bureau or
21 court of the date and time of such violation, together with the other
22 information contained in the original notice of liability. Failure to
23 send such information within such thirty-seven day time period shall
24 render the owner liable for the penalty prescribed by this section.
25 Where the lessor complies with the provisions of this paragraph, the
26 lessee of such vehicle on the date of such violation shall be deemed to
27 be the owner of such vehicle for purposes of this section, shall be
28 subject to liability for the violation of subdivision (a) of section
29 eleven hundred seventy-four of this title pursuant to this section and
30 shall be sent a notice of liability pursuant to subdivision (g) of this
31 section.

32 (k) 1. If the owner liable for a violation of subdivision (a) of
33 section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title pursuant to this
34 section was not the operator of the vehicle at the time of the
35 violation, the owner may maintain an action for indemnification against
36 the operator.

37 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, no owner of a
38 vehicle shall be subject to a monetary fine imposed pursuant to this
39 section if the operator of such vehicle was operating such vehicle with-
40 out the consent of the owner at the time such operator was found to have
41 been overtaking or passing a school bus. For purposes of this subdivi-
42 sion there shall be a presumption that the operator of such vehicle was
43 operating such vehicle with the consent of the owner at the time such
44 operator was found to have been overtaking or passing a school bus.

45 (l) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the liability
46 of an operator of a vehicle for any violation of subdivision (a) of
47 section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title.

48 (m) In any school district which adopts a school bus safety camera
49 program pursuant to subdivision (a) of this section, such school
50 district shall submit an annual report on the results of the use of its
51 school bus safety cameras to the governor, the temporary president of
52 the senate and the speaker of the assembly on or before June first, two
53 thousand twenty and on the same date in each succeeding year in which
54 the demonstration program is operable. Such report shall include, but
55 not be limited to:

1 1. a description of the number of buses and routes where school bus
2 safety cameras were used;

3 2. the aggregate number of annual incidents of violations of subdivi-
4 sion (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title within the
5 districts;

6 3. the number of violations recorded by school bus safety cameras in
7 the aggregate and on a daily, weekly and monthly basis;

8 4. the total number of notices of liability issued for violations
9 recorded by such systems;

10 5. the number of fines and total amount of fines paid after first
11 notice of liability issued for violations recorded by such systems;

12 6. the number of violations adjudicated and results of such adjudi-
13 cations including breakdowns of dispositions made for violations
14 recorded by such systems;

15 7. the total amount of revenue realized by such school district from
16 such adjudications;

17 8. expenses incurred by such school district in connection with the
18 program; and

19 9. quality of the adjudication process and its results.

20 (n) It shall be a defense to any prosecution for a violation of subdivi-
21 sion (a) of section eleven hundred seventy-four of this title that
22 such school bus safety cameras were malfunctioning at the time of the
23 alleged violation.

24 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.