



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM**

*Motorists who illegally pass school buses face fines of up to \$300*

**HILTON, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced the launch of the Monroe County School Bus Safety Program, a partnership with stop-arm enforcement technology provider Bus Patrol to protect students from the pervasive danger of motorists illegally passing school buses as students are boarding or exiting. Thus far, participating school districts include Hilton CSD, East Irondequoit CSD, Webster CSD, and Spencerport CSD. All suburban districts in Monroe County are eligible to participate, with approval by their boards of education.

“The health and safety of our neighbors, particularly our children, is my top priority – and the Monroe County School Bus Safety program will ensure our kids are safer as they walk to and from their school buses. I encourage all school districts throughout Monroe County to take advantage of this free program for their students. Thank you to my colleagues in the Monroe County Legislature who supported my proposal to install stop-arm cameras on our district school buses without any cost to the districts or local taxpayers,” **said County Executive Bello.**

Under the State Vehicle and Traffic Law, passing a school bus stopped with its red lights flashing and stop-arm extended is illegal. Traffic approaching from either direction must stop before reaching the bus either on a two-lane road, multi-lane highways, or on divided highways.

According to the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee, drivers in New York state illegally pass stopped school buses an estimated 50,000 times each school day, putting children at risk as they step on and off the bus.

“The data has shown that far too many motor vehicles are passing the red stop lights of the school bus and that puts our children in danger,” **said Mary Grow, president of the Monroe County Council of School Superintendents and superintendent of the East Irondequoit Central School District.** “With this legislation going into effect, our students and bus drivers will be safer as they board and exit the bus every day.”

“The safety of our children is of the utmost importance, and this program should be a no-brainer for school districts in Monroe County. From now on, individuals who might be inclined to pass a stopped school bus with its stop-arm extended will have to think twice. I urge the City of Rochester to join Monroe County in implementing this life-saving

program,” said **Monroe County Legislator President Sabrina Lamar**. “I understand that there are times when we are rushing to get to work, an appointment or an event. I need our drivers to understand that there is nothing more important than the safety and lives of our children. The next time you are behind a stopped school bus with its stop-arm extended, just wait. Not because you might get a ticket in the mail, but because you just might be saving a life.”

The Rochester City School District is not eligible to participate in the county program, but the City of Rochester may initiate its own similar program, if City Council approves.

In coming months, Bus Patrol will equip buses in the participating districts with cameras that capture the license plates of vehicles that pass buses, as well as video of the infraction. There is no cost to school districts or taxpayers for the equipment. Under the violator-funded program, first-time offenders will be assessed a civil fine of \$250, while subsequent violations within an 18-month period are subject to a \$25 increase, up to a maximum of \$300. The program does not impose points on driver’s licenses or affect automobile insurance rates. Prior to tickets being issued, the Monroe County Department of Public Safety will verify all photos of vehicles passing buses.

“Protecting our children and ensuring that school pickups and drop-offs are as safe as possible is of the utmost importance. Adding this technology is a step towards ensuring that extra safety. I’m proud to have supported the legislation that created this important safety measure. Launching this initiative will give families more peace of mind in knowing their children are safer getting on and off the bus,” said **Minority Leader Yversha Roman**.

"The safety of our residents always reigns paramount, especially for our children and students. While the precept to never pass a stopped school bus is ingrained into many of us as one of the main 'rules of the road' - we unfortunately continue to see dangerous drivers putting our students at risk. I was proud to vote in favor of this legislation and am even prouder to see it come to fruition," said **Legislator Jackie Smith**. "Today's official launch of the Bus Patrol Program will put these reckless drivers on notice, further hold them accountable, and most importantly, help keep our kids safe."

Bus Patrol will be installing road signs to notify drivers of the safety initiative and has fully equipped buses in the Hilton school district. The program is expected to go live there in mid-October, with a 30-day “warning period” preceding the assessment of fines. As other districts come on line, they will also have a 30-day warning period, however once two-thirds of eligible districts are participating, there will be no warning period if additional districts deploy the technology.

"With back to school around the corner, now is the time to remind motorists of their responsibility to stop for the school bus for the sake of our students,” said **Karoon Monfared, President and CEO at BusPatrol**. "As a community safety partner, BusPatrol is proud to partner with Monroe County to instill a culture of awareness around the school bus and make our roads safer.”

The partnership with Monroe County follows the success of BusPatrol's signature programs around the state, including Albany County, Dutchess County, Suffolk County, Rensselaer County and the City of Niagara Falls.

Resources and more information about Monroe County's stop-arm camera safety program can be found at [www.monroecounty.gov/school-bus-safety](http://www.monroecounty.gov/school-bus-safety).

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