

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Philippines

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 2480



INTRODUCED BY REP. MARCELINO "MARCY" R. TEODORO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the objective of the State to promote public safety in the transportation of passengers, particularly school children. To achieve this objective, it is essential that the State shall prescribe minimum design standards of school buses for the safety of the student passengers.

This bill seeks to prescribe regulations to mitigate the effects of vehicular accidents by prescribing safety standards for school buses.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Marcelino Teodoro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARCELINO "MARCY" R. TEODORO
Representative
1st District, City of Marikina

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AN ACT
PRESCRIBING SCHOOL BUS SAFETY STANDARDS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "School Bus Safety Act."

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* - It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote safety in order to protect passengers of school buses from injury in case of accidents.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* - As used in this Act, the term:

- A. "Bus" means a motor vehicle with motive power, except a trailer, designed for carrying more than ten (10) persons;
- B. "School Bus" means a bus that is used for purposes that include carrying students to and from public or private school or school-related events on a regular basis, but does not include a transit bus or a school-chartered bus;
- C. "School-Chartered Bus" means a bus that is operated under a short-term contract with the school authorities who have acquired exclusive use of the bus at a fixed charge in order to provide transportation for a group of pupils to a special school related event;
- D. "Secretary" means the Secretary of Transportation and Communication;
- E. "Seat Belts" refer to the combined lap belt and shoulder strap that fasten a rider to a moving vehicle and prevent him or her from being thrown out or against the interior of the vehicle during sudden stops.

SEC. 4. *Proficiency Standards for School Bus Drivers.* -

- A. *Requirement.* - Not later than one (1) year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe proficiency standards for school bus drivers who are required to possess a professional license to operate a school bus.
- B. *Demonstration of Proficiency.* - Upon the prescription of standards under paragraph (A), each school bus driver referred to in paragraph (A) shall demonstrate at such interval as the Secretary shall prescribe to the employer of the driver, the school, the licensing agency, or other person or agency responsible for regulating school bus drivers the proficiency of such drivers in operating a school bus in accordance with the proficiency standards prescribed under paragraph (A) or the proficiency standards established by the State concerned, as the case may be.

SEC. 5. *Seat Belts in School Buses.* –

A. *Requirement for Installation.* - Not later than one (1) year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prescribe regulations requiring driver seat belts and passenger seat belts (including lap safety belts or other child safety devices meeting applicable government safety standards) for each seating position in any newly manufactured school bus. Owners of school buses which are not currently equipped with seat belts shall be given a period of six (6) months from the publication of the regulations by the Secretary to install the necessary seat belts in their school buses.

B. *Promotion of Seat Belt Usage.* -

1. *In General.* - The Secretary, in consultation with appropriate safety organizations and parent-teacher organizations, shall conduct a program to promote and encourage the use of seat belts in school buses.
2. *Elements of Program.* - In conducting the program required under this subsection, the Secretary shall -
 - a. Encourage the local governments to monitor the mandatory usage of seat belts in school buses;
 - b. Develop and disseminate educational materials on the importance of using seat belts to passengers and drivers of school buses; and
 - c. Recognize in an appropriate manner the schools that achieve a high level of seat belt usage by passengers and drivers of school buses.

SEC. 6. *Determination of Practicability and Feasibility of Certain Safety and Access Requirements for School Buses.* -

A. *Commencement of Rulemaking Process.* - Immediately upon the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall begin a rulemaking process to determine the feasibility and practicability of a requirement for a decrease in the flammability of the material used in the construction of the interiors of school buses.

B. *Final Rule.* - Not later than one (1) year after such date, the Secretary shall promulgate a final rule providing for any requirement or standard that the Secretary determines to be feasible and practicable.

SEC. 7. *Registration.* - No school bus shall be allowed to acquire, maintain and renew registration unless it is equipped with the necessary seat belts.

SEC. 8. *Implementing Authority.* - The Secretary shall be primarily responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of this Act. The Secretary may provide for a reasonable period for public notice and comment consistent with ensuring expeditious but full implementation of the prescribed safety requirement of this Act.

SEC. 9. *Separability Clause.* - Should any provision of this Act be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the validity or constitutionality of the other provisions shall not be affected thereby.

SEC. 10. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. *Effectivity.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,