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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5581 (Substitute H-3 as passed by the House)
Sponsor: Representative Rick Jones
House Committee: Transportation
Senate Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 6-19-06

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Pupil Transportation Act to revise the standard by which a school bus is considered "clearly and continuously visible" with regard to procedures for receiving or discharging pupils.

Under the Act, a school bus driver must stop the bus either on the roadway, if pupils are required to cross the street, or, if pupils are not required to cross the street, as far off the roadway as practicable, to provide for the pupils' safety. While boarding or discharging pupils, the driver must activate the vehicle's alternatively flashing overhead red lights. Before resuming motion, the driver must deactivate the lights and allow congested traffic to disperse where practicable. The deactivation of the lights is the signal for stopped traffic to proceed.

When using the alternately flashing overhead red lights, a school bus driver may not stop on any highway or roadway for the purpose of receiving or discharging pupils under certain conditions, including the following:

- If the speed limit is more than 35 miles per hour and the stopped bus is not clearly and continuously visible to approaching vehicles for at least 400 feet.
- If the speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less and the stopped bus is not clearly and continuously visible to approaching vehicles for at least 200 feet.

When the distance from the stopped bus to the end of the highway or roadway is less than the specified distances, clear and continuous visibility must be available from the bus to the end of the highway or roadway.

A school bus is considered clearly and continuously visible if approaching traffic is able to see the entire width of the front and back of a school bus from a horizontal line tangent with the top of the vehicle's front and rear bumpers to a horizontal line tangent with the vehicle's most forward and rearward roofline for the entire 400-foot sight line to the school bus with no obstruction of the area for the entire 400-foot sight line to the school bus in its stopped position.

Under the bill, instead, a school bus would be clearly and continuously visible if both of the following conditions were satisfied:

- Approaching traffic was able to see the front of the bus extending from the roofline to and including the headlamps at the prescribed distances.

-- Approaching traffic was able to see the back of the bus extending from the roofline to and including the tail lamps and stop lamps at the prescribed distances.

MCL 257.1855

Legislative Analyst: Julie Koval

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Kathryn Summers-Coty

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.