

May 14, 2026

Honorable Representative Carol Hagen McEntee, Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary  
Rhode Island State House of Representatives  
82 Smith St.  
Providence, RI 02903

**BusPatrol America's Letter of Support to H.8523 - AN ACT RELATING TO  
MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- SPECIAL STOPS REQUIRED**

Dear Chair McEntee and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of BusPatrol America, I write in strong support of H8523. This legislation would improve Rhode Island's current school bus stop-arm safety law by creating a clearer, more efficient civil enforcement process for camera-based violations, supporting local implementation, and making enforcement easier to administer while preserving due process protections.

Specifically, H8523 would allow a driver to admit liability for illegally passing a stopped school bus and pay the \$300 civil fine directly to the municipality or its designee without the need for a court appearance. The bill also clarifies that a notice of violation may be issued based on evidence from a live digital video school bus violation detection monitoring system, and that the recipient may either pay the fine or request a hearing.

Every time a motorist illegally passes a stopped school bus, children are placed in harm's way while entering or exiting the bus. National data shows that more than 40 million illegal school bus passings occur each year across the United States. That is why BusPatrol partners with school districts, local communities, and law enforcement to help prevent dangerous driving around school buses and make the ride to and from school safer for every student.

BusPatrol's school bus safety programs combine public education with enforcement to change driver behavior and build a culture of awareness and accountability around stopped school buses. In Rhode Island, stop-arm camera evidence is securely transmitted for review, prepared as an evidence package, and submitted for law

enforcement review and determination before a notice is issued to the registered vehicle owner. This process helps promote accountability, due process, and public confidence.

H8523 is a sensible next step because it streamlines civil enforcement and removes unnecessary procedural barriers in cases where a driver is prepared to admit liability and resolve the violation promptly. It also preserves meaningful safeguards by maintaining the right to request a hearing, requiring supporting documentation with the notice, and allowing liability determinations to be made under a clear evidentiary standard. BusPatrol has consistently supported policy frameworks that make it easier for local communities to deploy lifesaving technology, reduce administrative burden, and lessen strain on traffic and municipal courts while maintaining deterrence and local control.

The experience in Rhode Island communities shows that this approach changes driver behavior over time. In Providence, only 3 percent of violators have reoffended. In North Providence and Warwick, repeat-offender rates are just 1 percent. These results are well below the national repeat-offender benchmark, where 10 percent or less of first-time violators receive a second violation. That is the real value of effective school bus safety enforcement. It is not simply about issuing penalties. It is about deterring dangerous driving, improving compliance, and better protecting children as they travel to and from school each day.

With the changes made in this bill, Rhode Island can improve collections, reduce court congestion, and reinforce the expectation that motorists must stop for a school bus when children are boarding or exiting.

For these reasons, BusPatrol respectfully urges the Committee to support H8523.

Sincerely,

Sam Olsen  
Director, Govt. Rel. & Strat Partnerships  
BusPatrol America

Cc: Members of the Committee on Judiciary