



May 14, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HOUSE BILL 8523 - AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES - SPECIAL STOPS
REQUIRED

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 8523, relating to school bus safety enforcement and violations for failure to stop for a school bus.

The League supports House Bill 8523 because it makes several important improvements to the administration and enforcement of Rhode Island's school bus safety laws while continuing to prioritize the safety of students traveling to and from school.

This legislation clarifies the definition of a divided highway to ensure the law is applied consistently and without confusion. It also updates statutory terminology to reference "Digital Video Bus Violation Detection Monitoring Systems," aligning the law with the technology currently used by school districts and municipalities.

Importantly, the bill helps protect municipalities and school departments from excessive financial exposure by capping actual costs at the level of the vendor's allocated share of violation revenue, even in circumstances where vendor costs exceed revenues collected. This safeguard provides greater fiscal certainty for local governments participating in these safety programs.

House Bill 8523 also increases the violation fine from \$250 to \$300, reinforcing the seriousness of illegally passing a stopped school bus and strengthening deterrence against dangerous driving behavior that places children at risk.

Additionally, the legislation provides municipalities and police departments with greater administrative flexibility by allowing either sworn officers or qualified technicians to process notices of violation. This practical change will help departments manage workloads more efficiently while preserving appropriate oversight.

The bill further streamlines the enforcement process by replacing the issuance of a formal summons with a notice of violation. This adjustment reduces administrative costs for municipalities and lessens burdens associated with formal service requirements while still ensuring accountability for violators.

The League also supports provisions that allow unresolved violations to be reported to the Rhode Island Division of Motor Vehicles, potentially impacting vehicle registration renewals until outstanding violations are addressed. This creates a stronger enforcement mechanism and encourages timely resolution of violations.

For these reasons, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns respectfully urges passage of House Bill 8523.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration of our perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. R. Rossi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Judiciary Committee