



AMERICAN SCHOOL BUS COUNCIL™

113 South West Street, 4th Floor | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 866.955.2722 | americanschoolbuscouncil.org

April 5, 2010

Dear Senator:

As public and private members of the American School Bus Council, we write to ask that you join in the bipartisan effort to encourage parents and school administrators to support local public school transportation. The yellow school bus is the safest, most environmentally friendly and least costly transportation option for getting kids to school. Today, the U.S. has approximately 480,000 school buses across the country that transport 50 percent of the nation's school children to and from school every day.

Statistics clearly show that children on school buses are far less likely to be killed or injured than if they ride to school in the family car or, worse yet, in a car driven by a high-school-age-student. Furthermore, because the newest school buses are 98 percent cleaner than buses manufactured just two decades ago and each bus takes an average of 36 cars off the road, greenhouse gases and other emissions from school buses are a fraction of what they would be if the bus were not available. Finally, the nation saves an average of 2.3 billion gallons of fuels each year thanks to school buses easing congestion and taking 17.3 million cars off the road. This saves parents the cost of fuel and the time it takes to drive to school and back.

A public education campaign is needed to educate parents of all of the benefits that the yellow school bus provides. Such a campaign will help parents make the right choices and allow the country to move forward on safety, energy and the environment in the transportation of our school children. Senators Ben Cardin (D-M) and James Inhofe (R-OK) are leading an effort to urge the Secretary of Transportation to undertake such an effort within funds already available for highway traffic safety and congestion mitigation and air quality improvement—all of which would improve greatly by increasing the number of kids on buses. Attached are the Dear Colleague they sent around recently asking for your help and the draft letter they and we hope you can support. Please let Senator Cardin or Senator Inhofe know that you will sign the letter to Secretary LaHood. Please visit our website for more information on ASBC and its mission at www.americanschoolbuscouncil.org. Questions may be directed to Tara Stratton at 202/530-4778.

Sincerely,

National Association for Pupil Transportation

National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services

National School Transportation Association

Blue Bird Corporation

IC Bus

Thomas Built Buses

Council Members

National Association for
Pupil Transportation

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State Directors of Pupil
Transportation Services

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IC Corporation

Thomas Built Buses

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Support Public Campaign to Promote School Bus Ridership

March 18, 2010

Dear Colleague,

The nation's fleet of 480,000 yellow school buses provides safe and energy efficient transportation for about half of the nation's school-aged children every day. Most of the rest get to and from school by riding in vehicles driven by parents or students, while others walk or ride bikes. As the nation looks for transportation solutions that address safety, environmental and traffic congestion problems, we need to promote greater use of the yellow school bus as the safest way of getting to school with huge energy benefits. This is particularly important as local school districts face cuts in bus service to deal with severely strained local budgets.

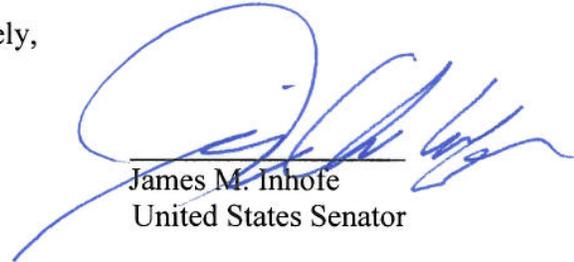
Please join us in writing to Department of Transportation Secretary LaHood to call for a nationwide public education and awareness program to promote school bus ridership and to protect school bus transportation services and grow ridership where necessary and beneficial.

- **School buses are the safest choice.** Statistics confirm that school buses are the safest way to get to school. School buses are designed to protect students with unique design features and school bus drivers are highly trained and screened and provide for the safest operating procedures. Students are 14 times safer on a school bus than using any other mode of transportation and 44 times safer than if they drive or ride with another student.
- **School buses are the greenest motorized choice.** Each school bus replaces an average of 36 cars. This translates into an annual savings of 2.3 billion gallons of fuel and \$6 billion in fuel costs nationwide. School buses ease traffic congestion by keeping an estimated 17.3 million cars off roads surrounding schools each morning and afternoon. Also, new school bus engines are 98% cleaner than buses manufactured 20 years ago and thousands of older buses have been modified to reduce emissions by up to 90%.
- **School bus use helps promote learning:** School buses provide the most and sometimes only reliable form of transportation to and from school, which promotes attendance, being on time, and encourages better student achievement.

A public education campaign is needed to communicate these benefits to students, parents and state and local elected officials. Please join us in adding your signature to the attached letter to Secretary LaHood to help ensure that this valuable mode of transportation is protected. Please contact Caroline Goodbody in Senator Cardin's office at 228-6449 or Alex Herrgott in Senator Inhofe office at 224-8218 to cosign the letter.

Sincerely,


Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator


James M. Inhofe
United States Senator

DATE

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing to request your support for a federally-funded public education and awareness campaign to support the safety, environmental, economic, energy, congestion, and traffic benefits of increased school bus ridership.

Each and every school day, nearly 25 million children are safely and efficiently transported to school by a yellow school bus. This iconic symbol of American education is also the safest way for children to get to school. Yellow school buses help keep an estimated 17.3 million cars off the road each day during morning and afternoon rush hours, when traffic is at its worst. Getting more kids riding school buses, instead of travelling separately in multiple vehicles, reduces parents' and teens' transportation costs, reduces fossil fuel consumption by billions of gallons and dramatically reduces traffic congestion around schools making communities safer for kids who walk and bike to school. Across the country, school districts face financial strains forcing school systems to choose between school bus service and other educational priorities.

School Buses are an important transportation alternative that gets kids to school safely and on-time. Promoting increased student ridership on school buses provides a great opportunity to address our nation's road safety, environmental, energy, and traffic congestion problems. A federal campaign targeted at parents, driving-aged students as well as local and state elected officials would be critical to achieving the goal.

We urge the Department to develop and implement a public education campaign promoting the benefits of riding the school bus to school. Though we are open to suggestions of ways to finance such a program, we believe that existing programs that address air quality or highway safety would serve as an appropriate funding mechanism. We recommend that the U.S. Department of Transportation use funds from its current transportation programs for such a campaign. Thank you for your attention to this issue and I look forward to your response to our recommendation.

Sincerely,