

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session



Senate
Office of the Secretary

'13 SEP 18 P1 34

SENATE
S.B. 1710

RECEIVED BY: *ju*

Introduced by Senator Poe

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.

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

Grace Poe
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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 may be cited as the "School Bus Safety Act of 2013."

SECTION 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.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms - For purposes of this Act the term:

- a) "Bus" means a motor vehicle with motive power, except a trailer, designed for carrying more than 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) "Seats Belts" refer to the combined lap belt and shoulder strap that fasten a rider to moving vehicle and prevent him from being thrown out or against the interior of the vehicle during sudden stops.

SECTION. 4. Proficiency Standards for School Bus Drivers.

- a) Requirement- Not later than one (1) year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) 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 subsection (a), each school bus driver referred to in subsection (a) shall demonstrate (at such interval as the DOTC 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 driver in operating a school bus in accordance with the proficiency standards prescribed under subsection (a) or the proficiency standards established by the State concerned, as the case may be.

SECTION 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 DOTC 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 of this Act to install the necessary seat belts in their school buses.

b) Promotion of Seat Belt Usage -

- 1) In General- The DOTC, 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 DOTC shall
 - i. Encourage the local governments to monitor the mandatory usage of seat belts in school buses;
 - ii. Develop and disseminate educational materials on the importance of using seat belts to passengers and drivers of school buses; and
 - iii. Recognize in an appropriate manner school that achieve a high level of seat belt usage by passengers and drivers of school buses.

SECTION 6. Registration. - No school bus shall be allowed to acquire, maintain and renew registration unless it is equipped with the necessary seat belts.

SECTION 7. Implementing Authority. - The DOTC shall be primarily responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of this Act. For this purpose, in consultation with relevant government agencies and private citizens organizations and stakeholders, the DOTC shall issue within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the relevant implementing rules and regulations.

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.

SECTION. 8. Separability Clause. - If any provision, or part hereof, is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 9. Repealing Clause. - Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary to or inconsistent with, the provision of this Act is hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 10. Effectivity Clause. -This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved,