



1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 885

March 16, 2000 - Introduced by Representatives MILLER and HANDRICK,
cosponsored by Senator RISSER. Referred to Committee on Highway Safety.

1 **AN ACT** *to amend* 346.48 (1), 346.48 (2) (a), 346.48 (2) (bm), 346.48 (2) (c) and
2 346.48 (3) of the statutes; **relating to:** applicability to private roads and
3 driveways of certain rules of the road governing passing school buses.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law requires motorists who approach a school bus that is stopped on a public road and is displaying flashing red lights to stop their approaching vehicle not less than 20 feet from the bus and to remain stopped until the bus resumes motion or the bus driver extinguishes the flashing red warning lights. A motorist who violates this requirement may be required to forfeit not less than \$30 nor more than \$300. The owner or lessee of a vehicle that violates these requirements may be held liable for the violation under this state's "owner liability" law, under which a school bus driver who observes a violation may report the violation to police.

This bill extends these stopping requirements to private roads and driveways. A "private road or driveway" is every way or place in private ownership and used for vehicular travel only by the owner and those having express or implied permission from the owner, and every road or driveway upon the grounds of public institutions other than public schools and institutions under the jurisdiction of the county board of supervisors. Under the bill, any motorist who approaches a school bus that is stopped on a public road or on a private road or driveway must stop the vehicle not less than 20 feet from the bus and must remain stopped until the bus resumes motion

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or the bus driver extinguishes the flashing red warning lights. The “owner liability” law applies to violations committed on private roads or driveways.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 346.48 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

2 346.48 (1) The operator of a vehicle which approaches from the front or rear
3 any school bus which has stopped on a street ~~or~~ highway or private road or driveway
4 when the bus is equipped according to s. 347.25 (2) and when it is displaying flashing
5 red warning lights, shall stop the vehicle not less than 20 feet from the bus and shall
6 remain stopped until the bus resumes motion or the operator extinguishes the
7 flashing red warning lights. The operator of any school bus which approaches from
8 the front or rear any school bus which has stopped and is displaying flashing red
9 warning lights shall display its flashing red lights while stopped. This subsection
10 does not apply to operators of vehicles proceeding in the opposite direction on a
11 divided highway or divided private road or driveway.

12 **SECTION 2.** 346.48 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

13 346.48 (2) (a) Except as provided in par. (b) the operator of a school bus
14 equipped with flashing red warning lights as specified in s. 347.25 (2) shall actuate
15 such lights at least 100 feet before stopping to load or unload pupils or other
16 authorized passengers, and shall not extinguish such lights until loading or
17 unloading is completed and persons who must cross the highway or private road or
18 driveway are safely across. Where the curb and sidewalk are laid on one side of the
19 road only, the operator shall use the flashing red warning lights when loading or
20 unloading passengers from either side.

21 **SECTION 3.** 346.48 (2) (bm) of the statutes is amended to read:

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1 346.48 (2) (bm) Except as provided in par. (b) 2. or unless prohibited by
2 municipal ordinance enacted under s. 349.21 (2), a school bus operator shall use the
3 flashing red warning lights as provided in par. (a) in a zone designated by “school”
4 warning signs as provided in s. 118.08 (1) in which a street ~~or~~, highway or private
5 road or driveway borders the grounds of a school when pupils or other authorized
6 passengers are loaded or unloaded directly from or onto the school grounds or that
7 portion of the right-of-way between the roadway and the school grounds.

8 **SECTION 4.** 346.48 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

9 346.48 (2) (c) When a school bus is being used on a highway or private road or
10 driveway for purposes other than those specified in s. 340.01 (56) (a) and (am), the
11 flashing red warning lights shall not be used, and all markings on the front and rear
12 of the bus indicating it is a school bus shall be removed or completely concealed;
13 except that any time a motor vehicle is equipped as provided under ss. 347.25 (2) and
14 347.44 and is transporting children for any purpose, the school bus markings may
15 remain unconcealed and the flashing red signals may be used as provided in this
16 section and when so used, sub. (1) applies to operators of other motor vehicles.

17 **SECTION 5.** 346.48 (3) of the statutes is amended to read:

18 346.48 (3) If the operator of a motor vehicle overtakes a school bus which is
19 stopped and is loading or unloading pupils or other authorized passengers at an
20 intersection on the right side of a roadway or private road or driveway in a business
21 or residence district in which the display of the flashing red warning lights on the
22 school bus is not permitted, the operator shall pass at a safe distance to the left of the
23 school bus and shall not turn to the right in front of the school bus at that intersection.

24 **SECTION 6. Initial applicability.**

