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LRB-2862/1 ARG:kmg:pg

2001 SENATE BILL 179

May 16, 2001 – Introduced by Senators Grobschmidt, Plache, Burke, Risser and Shibilski, cosponsored by Representatives Plale, Urban, Sinicki, Turner, Ryba, Ott, Morris-Tatum and Wasserman. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT to create 347.445 of the statutes; relating to: requiring crossing gates

on school buses, granting rule-making authority, and providing a penalty.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, school buses must be painted yellow and black and must have the words "SCHOOL BUS" in black letters at least eight inches high written on the front and back of the bus. A school bus painted in this manner may not be operated unless it is equipped with flashing red signals and with a 360-degree flashing white strobe light. Current law also allows the department of transportation (DOT) to prescribe rules requiring additional equipment for school buses. These DOT rules currently require every school bus that is painted yellow and black to be equipped with a stop signal arm, and the rules also provide specifications for the stop signal arm. These rules also allow, but do not require, a school bus to be equipped with a safety control arm mounted on the right side of the bumper.

This bill requires any school bus that is painted yellow and black to be equipped, on the front, with a retractable crossing gate that, when in use, prevents children from crossing in front of the bus in such proximity that they are not visible to the bus driver. The bill also requires DOT to prescribe rules for the specifications, installation, and operation of these crossing gates. Any person who operates a school bus that is not equipped with the required crossing gate may be required to forfeit not less than \$10 nor more than \$200.

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For further information see the **state** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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

Section 1. 347.445 of the statutes is created to read:

347.445 Crossing gates for school buses. No person may operate a school bus that is painted as provided in s. 347.44 unless it is equipped with a retractable crossing gate on the front of the bus that, when in use, prevents children from crossing in front of the school bus in such proximity that they are not visible to the operator of the school bus from the operator's seat. The secretary shall prescribe rules for the specifications, installation, and operation of crossing gates required under this section.

Section 2. Effective date.

(1) This act takes effect on the first day of the 7th month beginning after publication.

12 (END)