

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 44th Legislature (1993)

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1019

By: Widener and Johnson (Glen)

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution relating to school buses; requesting the State Board of Education to adopt standards for certain reflective materials; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the State of Oklahoma has a long history of supporting measures aimed at enhancing pupil transportation safety; and

WHEREAS, even though our nation's school transportation industry has a good safety record relative to other modes of transportation, hundreds of children continue to be killed or injured annually while in the process of going to and from school-related activities using school buses; and

WHEREAS, more than fifty years ago yellow was selected as the national standard school bus color because it helped to make school buses more conspicuous and highly visible to motorists during daylight hours; and

WHEREAS, the Institute of Transportation Engineers has determined the decision sight distance for motorists with 20-40 vision, traveling 60 miles per hour, to be 1,275 feet, and at 30 miles per hour to be 625 feet; and

WHEREAS, school bus yellow paint is opaque and poorly reflects light from approaching vehicles; therefore, paint is only visible for too short a distance to provide sufficient warning to approaching motorists during times of poor visibility; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Transportation Administration estimates more than sixty million incidents annually occur where

motorists fail to stop for school buses while in the process of loading and unloading children; and

WHEREAS, when a school bus accident occurs, public concern is heightened and the inevitable questions are asked: "Why did it happen? What would have prevented it?"; and

WHEREAS, school buses without reflective markings are inconspicuous and nondescript during periods of poor visibility; and

WHEREAS, school buses operate during periods of poor visibility, especially in early morning, late afternoon, and evening hours of darkness and during hours of inclement weather; and

WHEREAS, the public expects that federal and state governments, as well as local school districts and private school bus contractors, will continually review the safety of school bus transportation and take all reasonable precautions to protect children who travel by school bus; and

WHEREAS, the landmark safety study, National Research Council, Transportation Research Board (TRB) Special Report 222, "Improving School Bus Safety", recommended that in order to make school buses more visible and avoid nighttime accidents, the use of reflective materials on school buses and the determination of minimum standards for the use of such materials should be considered; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Transportation Administration has conducted comprehensive research studies of vehicles even larger than many school buses and found that reflective markings significantly enhance their conspicuity during hours of poor visibility and prevent rear-end and side-impact accidents; and

WHEREAS, a consortium of school bus industry organizations at the Eleventh National Conference on School Transportation, May 13-19, 1990, in response to national level research studies, particularly TRB Special Report 222, adopted recommended standards for marking school buses with reflective materials; and

WHEREAS, thousands of school buses throughout the nation now have been marked with reflective materials as a cost-effective, accident-prevention countermeasure, and at least one major manufacturer of school buses offers markings using the latest reflective technology as a standard equipment item; and

WHEREAS, other states, such as New York, have adopted standards based on the Eleventh National Conference standard and have authorized funds to reimburse school bus owners for the cost of marking school buses with reflective materials.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 44TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the State Board of Education adopt standards requiring all new school buses when purchased to be marked with reflective materials of the highest quality available before the beginning of the 1993-94 school year.

THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Education and the Governor of this state.

44-1-7001

KSM