

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Let's Remember Adam Needs Your Help

From: Pierre Ranger

Sent: January 31, 2019 4:18 PM

To: Office of the Mayor <mayor@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Let's Remember Adam Needs Your Help

February 1, 2019

Honourable Mayor Eisenberger & Hamilton City Council
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

RE: School Bus Safety - Implementing Stop Arm technology

Dear Honourable Mayor and Council,

In 2000, my youngest brother Adam was tragically killed on his way home from school. A driver failed to stop for a stopped school bus, with emergency lights flashing and stop arm deployed, while Adam was crossing the street after exiting the school bus. Adam was five years old.

I am writing to request your help to put an end to stop-arm violations in order to make travel to and from school safer for children in Hamilton.

For the past 16 years, my family has been championing the "Let's Remember Adam - STOP FOR THE SCHOOL BUS" initiative to ensure that no family has to endure a senseless loss like ours. Our mission is to ensure all children travel to and from school safely every day. We spread Adam's message of school bus and student safety through educational campaigns that raise awareness of stop arm road safety rules and their enforcement. *Unfortunately, stop-arm violations continue to occur on an all too frequent basis, even in my community of Mattawa, where this tragedy took place.*

Last month, my family and I launched the 'This has to stop. We need to stop!' campaign because technological advances such as stop-arm cameras now provide a means of holding drivers who break the law accountable. [Our campaign video](#) has reached over 2 million people in just over a week and we received overwhelming support for stop-arm cameras on school buses.

My appeal to you today is to respectfully request the City of Hamilton to implement solutions like stop arm camera technology to change driver behaviour and make the journey to and from school safer for all children who ride the school bus in Hamilton.

For over 30 years now, school buses have been using their flashing lights and stop arms to warn drivers to stop within 20 meters of the school bus. This is governed by the Highway Traffic Act under subsection 175 (11) or (12). Fines range from \$400 to \$2,000 and up to 6 demerit points in Ontario, for a first offence. However, due to a lack of enforcement resources, vehicles pass stopped school buses on a daily basis with no concern for our children's safety. In fact, a pilot project conducted in Mississauga in 2016 showed an average of 2.5 incidents per day where drivers failed to adhere to the law. This is a troubling statistic that needs to change for the better. One only needs to look south of the border to see this risk become reality. In the last two weeks of October 2018 alone, 5 children were killed due to stop-arm violations in the United States.

My family and I do not need statistics to understand that the danger is real. Our children are precious and the school bus is where most of them begin and end their school days.

Legislation was passed over a year ago that would help prevent these types of incidents under Bill 174, Section 21 (1) Duty of drivers when school bus stopped, specifically part XIV.3 School Bus Camera System. However, we are still waiting for regulations to be approved in order for this technology to be implemented.

In December 2018 I wrote to the Minister of Transportation requesting that he expedite the regulatory amendments required for the legislation to become law. I received the attached response from the Ministry of Transportation this week that specifies, "In order for the province to develop the necessary supporting regulations, we require municipalities to identify the technology that will be used as well as develop the needed operational framework for the processing offences." I trust you have also received correspondence from the Province on this issue.

February 11, 2019 will mark the 19th anniversary of my brother's death. On behalf of my family and the Let's Remember Adam - STOP FOR THE SCHOOL BUS initiative, **I am asking you to help us honour Adam by mandating stop-arm cameras on all school buses in your community, and informing the Ministry of Transportation and Premier Ford of the importance of this technology to increase student safety.**

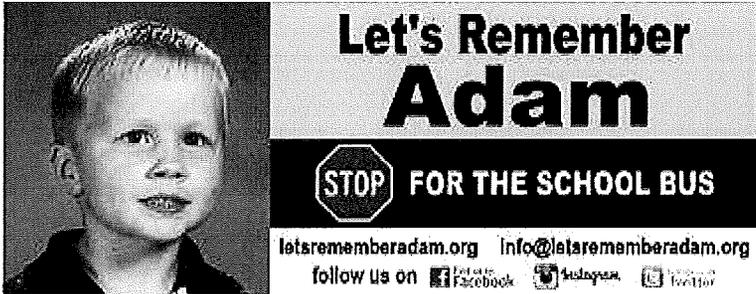
If I may provide any assistance in furthering this cause or providing additional information to you and you're Council, please do not hesitate to contact me at 705-840-8871. You can learn more about Adam's story and the "Let's Remember Adam - Stop for the School Bus" initiative at www.letsrememberadam.org.

Thank you in advance for taking a stance on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Pierre Ranger

Chairman, Let's Remember Adam - STOP FOR THE SCHOOL BUS



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January 16, 2019

107-2018-83

Pierre Ranger
P.O Box 342
Mattawa, Ontario
POH 1V0

Dear Mr. Ranger,

Re: School Bus Cameras

Thank you for sharing your concerns about school bus safety and, in particular, for your recommendation to move forward with the implementation of school bus stop-arm cameras.

I am very sorry to hear about the tragic loss of your brother Adam. The objective behind so many legislative initiatives the government has implemented over the years has been to improve road safety and to try to prevent so many of these needless deaths.

The safety of occupants on all vehicle types is a priority for the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) – especially the safety of our children traveling on school buses. I want to assure you that MTO has been working very hard to make sure that school buses are amongst the safest ways for children to travel.

As you know, it is illegal to fail to stop for a stopped school bus that has its red lights flashing and the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA) sets out tough penalties for drivers who break this law. If a driver does not stop, they can be fined \$400 to \$2,000 and get six demerit points for a first offence. For drivers who are convicted a second time within five years, the penalty is a fine of \$1,000 to \$4,000 and six demerit points. Drivers could also go to jail for up to six months.

However, I recognize that no penalty can ever ease the pain of losing a loved one. We are committed to further addressing unsafe and inappropriate driving behaviours, and we aim to do so through a combination of strategies, including

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legislation, public education and providing support to the enforcement efforts of Ontario's police services.

With regards to school bus cameras, it is important to note that the HTA does not prohibit adding video equipment to school buses that record drivers who illegally pass stopped school buses, provided that the equipment does not extend beyond the allowable width of the vehicle and it does not interfere with its safe operation. However, photo/video evidence from a vehicle-based camera must be introduced by a witness to be admitted in court.

As you also pointed out on December 21, 2017, the government passed the *Cannabis Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act* which:

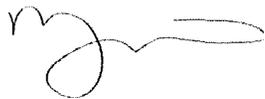
- Expands the school bus passing offence to include when the stop arm is actuated.
- Allows for the development of regulations that would establish specialized evidentiary rules to clarify what evidence could be used to prove a driver improperly passed a stopped school bus without the need to have a witness present in court.

These changes currently require regulatory amendments to become law. We are now looking to municipal partners, including school boards, to decide whether or not they will pursue the implementation of a school bus camera framework within their own jurisdictions. In order for the province to develop the necessary supporting regulations we require municipalities to identify the technology that will be used as well as develop the needed operational framework for the processing of offences.

To expedite implementation of this initiative I would suggest you bring your concerns regarding school bus cameras forward to your local municipality and possibly the school board. They will likely be working together to decide whether this program is something that should be pursued in your area.

Thank you for writing and for your advocacy efforts to improve the safety for children riding on a school bus.

Sincerely,



Kevin Byrnes
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Road User Safety Division