

Let's Remember Adam

STOP FOR THE SCHOOL BUS



January 31, 2020

Chairman Danko and Public Works Committee Members
City of Hamilton
City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

RE: 10.1 - *City of Hamilton Vision Zero Action Plan 2019 - 2025 Update*

Dear Chair Danko and Public Works Committee Members,

It's been almost exactly a year since I reached out to your Council asking for stop-arm camera enforcement to be implemented in Hamilton. While there have been positive steps taken to highlight student safety on our roads, more action is needed. On Monday, February 3, your committee is considering item 10.1 - *City of Hamilton Vision Zero Action Plan 2019 - 2025 Update* that highlights the need for "School Bus Enforcement Cameras" (see page 59 of 85). I hope you will take the lead in ensuring a school bus stop arm camera program is implemented in Hamilton by September 2020.

Last year, letters from the public were sent into Council asking for a program to be put in place. Numerous councillors spoke to these letters of support. Today you have the chance to act on those requests from your constituents by moving ahead with a plan to put stop-arm cameras on all school buses.

For over 30 years, 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). However, 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 and your council can help by being a Vision Zero leader. **To be clear, it is the responsibility of the city to enforce the Highway Traffic Act, not School Boards, and therefore it is up to the municipal government to lead on implementation.**

You may recall that on February 11 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 its red overhead lights flashing and stop arm deployed, while Adam was crossing the street after exiting the school bus. Adam was five years old.

For the past 17 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

**This Has to Stop.
We Need to Stop.**



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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 as we have seen in media reports where violators were caught on dashboard cameras in Hamilton. This has to stop.

Our efforts have led to widespread support from municipalities across Ontario, many of which are now taking steps to implement their own stop-arm camera programs.

I am pleased to report that my hometown of Mattawa passed a motion in December to partner with BusPatrol Canada to outfit all 15 school buses in the town at no cost to taxpayers. The collaborative effort led by the Town of Mattawa saw town politicians and staff, the school bus consortium, and the OPP come together to support a cost-effective and feasible plan, so we know it can be done. Peel Regional Council also recently passed a motion which directed Regional and City staff to create a working group in conjunction with police and the school bus consortium to develop an implementation plan for stop-arm cameras by early April for a September 2020 deployment.

These are important milestones for my family and I as a tribute to Adam's legacy, as well as the first step towards our larger goal; to ensure ALL students are safe while entering, travelling on, and exiting a school bus.

My appeal to you today is to respectfully request that the City of Hamilton immediately take steps 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. Just as Peel Regional Council did, I ask that Committee and Council direct city staff, in conjunction with Hamilton Police Service and the appropriate school bus consortium, to develop an implementation plan that will see stop-arm cameras deployed on all school buses by September 2020. Let's remember Adam together and act now. We cannot wait until it's too late.

Sincerely,

Pierre Ranger

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