

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 92

BY SENATOR ERDEY AND REPRESENTATIVES JEFFERSON, REYNOLDS AND SHADOIN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To direct the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state Department of Education to establish policies and procedures to evaluate school bus driver training curricula utilized by private providers and to certify qualified private providers to deliver required training to Louisiana school bus drivers, provided their curriculum includes the training and topics prescribed by the department.

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:491 requires school bus drivers employed by public elementary and secondary schools and school systems to be certified as having participated in a school bus driver instructional program or in-service training provided by the state Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:497.4 requires the state Department of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, to "develop and implement a program for the training and certification of school bus operators"; and

WHEREAS, in response to these statutory requirements, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted rules and regulations, and the state Department of Education developed policy, to provide for the training of school bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, all school bus drivers in Louisiana must receive preservice certification by successfully completing the Louisiana School Bus Operator Training Course as prescribed by the state Department of Education and conducted by a department certified trainer; and

WHEREAS, currently, all preservice school bus driver training must be conducted by instructors certified by the state Department of Education and who are required to use the school bus driver training curriculum prescribed by the department; and

WHEREAS, bus driver training curricula developed by private providers, while not identical to the curriculum developed by the state Department of Education, have been used successfully in more than 2,700 school districts across the country to provide training to school bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, certain private providers of school bus training and curricula have been recognized by traffic safety organizations such as the National Association for Pupil Transportation; and

WHEREAS, a number of major insurance providers recognize and recommend the school bus driver training programs offered by certain private providers to schools and school districts because of the positive impacts such training programs have on reducing preventable accidents and claims, thereby increasing school bus safety and reducing insurance premiums; and

WHEREAS, regardless of the curriculum used, the primary purpose of school bus driver training is to educate drivers to operate a school bus in a safe and efficient manner, thereby ensuring the safety of the state's school children; and

WHEREAS, schools and school districts should have the option to choose among all qualified providers of school bus driver training and curricula that meet or exceed the state requirements.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby direct the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state Department of Education to establish policies and procedures to evaluate school bus driver training curricula utilized by private providers and to certify qualified private providers to deliver required training to Louisiana school bus drivers, provided their curriculum includes the training and topics prescribed by the department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education shall submit a written report to the Senate and House committees on education regarding the policies and procedures developed by the state board and the state department to evaluate the school bus driver training curricula utilized by private providers and to certify qualified private providers to provide required training to Louisiana school bus drivers, not later than October 1, 2015, which shall include a copy of the policies and procedures developed pursuant to this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the policies and procedures developed to evaluate the school bus driver training curricula utilized by private providers and to certify qualified private providers to deliver required training to Louisiana school bus drivers shall be posted on the state Department of Education's website.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state superintendent of education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES