

**HOUSE SUMMARY OF SENATE AMENDMENTS****HB 156****2019 Regular Session****Pugh**

MTR VEHICLE/BUSES-SCHOOL: Revises provisions related to school buses

**Synopsis of Senate Amendments**

1. Require that a school bus meet certain national minimum standards, BESE regulations, and all statutory requirements for the construction, design, equipment, and operation of school buses.
2. Provide that state laws and regulations relative to the construction, design, equipment, and operation of school buses apply to charter schools.

**Digest of Bill as Finally Passed by Senate**

Present law requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to adopt regulations for the construction, design, equipment, and operation of school buses. Provides that a school bus that meets the latest revised minimum standards for school buses adopted and recommended by certain national entities is in compliance with the BESE regulations. Proposed law instead requires that a school bus meet the minimum standards, BESE regulations, and all statutory requirements for the construction, design, equipment, and operation of school buses. Proposed law changes present law references to the national groups and associations that have adopted and recommended the most recent revised minimum standards for school buses.

Proposed law provides that state laws and regulations relative to the construction, design, equipment, and operation of school buses apply to charter schools. Further provides that BESE rules and regulations relative to school bus specifications and inspection requirements, operational procedures, and school bus operator and bus attendant pre-employment screening and training requirements apply to charter schools.

Present law prohibits a school bus operator from engaging in a call on a cellular radio telecommunication device while driving a school bus. Provides exceptions in certain emergency situations. Defines cellular radio telecommunication device. Specifies that citizens band radios and citizens band radio hybrids are not cellular radio telecommunication devices. Proposed law adds that a device with a push-to-talk function used in a similar manner as a citizens band radio or a citizens band radio hybrid is not a cellular radio telecommunication device.

(Amends R.S. 17:164 and R.S. 32:289(B); Adds R.S. 17:3996(A)(18), (19), and (20) and (B)(54))