**August Stop Arm Violation Enforcement (SAVE) Campaign**

**SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: [Date]**

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**[Local Law Enforcement Department] Stepping up patrols to prevent stop-arm violations**

**Police Urge Drivers to Stop Illegal School Bus Passing**

**[City, State, Date]** —As students head back to the classroom, **[Local Law Enforcement Department]** is reminding motorists to stop for school buses or face the consequences.

Starting August 1, **[Local Law Enforcement Department]** will increase patrols to prevent stop-arm violations, speeding and other forms of reckless driving around school buses and in school zones. The overtime patrols are funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration through grants administered by the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI).

“When a school bus’s red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, drivers must come to a complete stop,” said **[Local Official]**. “This is not a suggestion — it’s the law.”

Despite thousands of motorists being cited under the SAVE program, unsafe driving around school buses continues to be a concern, according to state officials.

In April, thousands of bus drivers who participated in a one-day observational survey counted 2,091 stop-arm violations in Indiana. That one-day total, when multiplied by the number of school days, adds up to a potential 376,380 violations throughout the school year.

The data comes from the National School Bus Illegal Passing Driver Survey, which is managed by the Indiana Department of Education in the state. This year, data collection took place on April 25, with 6,665 bus drivers participating from 195 school districts.

"It is disheartening that we still have people who are willing to put the lives of students and bus drivers at risk," said Devon McDonald, ICJI Executive Director. "Law enforcement cannot be everywhere, so it is up to drivers to do the right thing and exercise caution around school buses. Students' lives depend on it."

During the enforcement period, officers will coordinate with local bus drivers and school transportation officials, with efforts concentrated in the morning and afternoon hours. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness about the importance of school bus safety and following the law.

“Passing a stopped school bus is against the law and could have fatal consequences. Nothing is worth the risk,” said **[Local Official]**. “We need every driver to pay attention, because children’s lives are on the line.”

Disregarding a school bus stop arm is a Class A Infraction. Violators could pay a fine of up to $10,000, have their license suspended for up to 90 days for the first offense or up to 1 year for the second.

If the person disregarding a school bus stop arm causes bodily injury to a person, the offense becomes a Class 6 felony. Violators face anywhere from six months to two and a half years in jail. If someone is killed, the offense becomes a Class 5 felony, carrying a sentence between one year and six years.

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