



STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
ALBANY, N.Y. 12232  
[www.dot.ny.gov](http://www.dot.ny.gov)

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May 2, 2013

Honorable Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr.  
New York State Senate  
Legislative Office Building, Room 609  
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Fuschillo:

Although I am not able to participate at your hearing on ignition interlock devices on school buses, I wanted to share some information on DOT's important role in ensuring that our children are transported safely and efficiently between their homes and schools each and every school day: the Department is responsible for performing comprehensive safety inspections of all school buses operated in New York at a minimum of once every six months.

Our inspection staff reviews over four hundred safety components during the inspection process, which takes approximately sixty to ninety minutes to perform. Examples of items that are part of the school bus inspection include but are not limited to:

- inspecting each brake component;
- checking all facets of the engine compartment;
- measuring the tread depth of all tires;
- initiating all flashing lights and stop arms;
- ensuring every emergency exit is operational;
- examining the entire exhaust system for leaks; and
- carrying out a performance braking test by measuring the rate of deceleration of both the service and parking brakes.

The breadth of the NYSDOT school bus inspection program is extensive in that New York has more school buses than any other state in the nation. Approximately 55,000 school buses operate throughout New York and as stated earlier each are inspected a minimum of twice a year by NYSDOT inspection staff. Through normal attrition and replacement this equates to roughly 4,000 to 4,500 new school vehicles being presented in school service in New York State every year.

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Bills that have been introduced in each house (S-1347 Senator Maziarz, A-1862 Assemblyman Montesano, and A-837 Assemblyman Ryan) would mandate interlock ignition devices on all new school buses manufactured on or after January 1, 2015; and allow school boards to establish policies for retrofitting existing school buses.

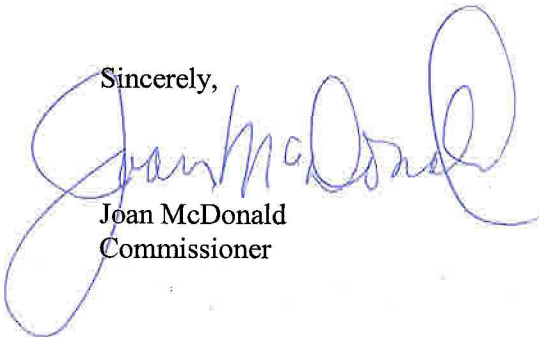
Pursuant to the regulations established under Leandra's Law which passed in 2009, there currently are seven approved vendors of three classes of ignition interlock devices on the website of the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). CLASS I ignition interlock devices:

- Meet all New York State Department of Health and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Regulations and Standards;
- Utilize Fuel Cell Technology;
- Contain Reporting Capabilities and Capabilities for Storage of Data;
- Contain Programmable Re-Test Sequences;
- Provide for Data Download, Inspection and Re-Calibration Service; and
- Contain Anti-Tampering and Anti-Circumvention Features.

CLASS II ignition interlock devices have all the features noted in CLASS I plus additional features including photographic positive identification capability (camera or biometric facial recognition) and, for CLASS III devices, all capabilities of CLASS I & II with additional features that include: GPS location of vehicle capability; real time data reporting; infra-red or other low-light camera capability for night use; hum tone detection; an infra-red sensor that detects heat and proximity to verify human breath; keys enabling service codes to be entered; an early recall system if a fuel cell fails; use of split cell technology; restricted drive time capabilities; an unlock code to minimize towing due to lockouts; voice instruction; probation/judicial internet access for real-time monitoring 24/7; 911 emergency response; target tracking; and a requirement that the subject must be in a photo to take a test.

The Department recognizes the importance of the safe transportation of students and the vital role of the bus inspection program and looks forward to continuing its close working relationship with your committee, the legislature, school districts and the school bus industry on this issue.

Sincerely,



Joan McDonald  
Commissioner