



**TO: Common Council Public Safety Committee**

**FROM: Lisa Klindt Simpson, Safe Kids Southeast WI Coordinator, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin**

**DATE: 10/1/2015**

**RE: Support School Bus Ordinance**

Good Morning Chairman Witkowski and Members of the Public Safety Committee. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to submit written testimony today. My name is Lisa Klindt Simpson and I am the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin Coordinator.

Safe Kids Wisconsin is led by Children's Hospital of Wisconsin to achieve our common goal of keeping Wisconsin kids safe by preventing unintentional injuries.

Under current law, school buses are actually prohibited from using their flashing lights and stop arms on streets with sidewalks and curbs on both sides, allowing motorists to pass a school bus that is loading or unloading students. These safety features are essential to the overall well-being of our children's safety and it is our duty to ensure our children are protected at all times.

The threats these students encounter on a daily basis are evident. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), for roads, Milwaukee is the most dangerous county in the state, almost double of any other county with 68 fatalities as a result in 2011. A study from the University of Wisconsin in 2006 shows 1,340 crashes were caused by running red lights in Milwaukee and that same study estimated the societal costs of those crashes to be \$131 million.

The proposed ordinance would not change Milwaukee Public School's policy explaining to students the use of sidewalks and crosswalks. At the same time, motorist must be aware of the possibility of children crossing the street when school buses are near. Students are most often disembarking from school buses during the busiest time of the time and safety can often be overlooked. This ordinance will require motorists to stop for any bus that is loading or unloading students.

Students cannot be held solely responsible for their safety on the road. Motorist need to be alert and aware of students crossing the street. Without this ordinance students have no protection against injury caused by vehicles on the street. And the inconsistent nature of the bus stop procedures in the city makes compliance, enforcement and education much more difficult. Current procedures for school buses are detrimental to the safety of all students.

Children's Hospital of Wisconsin urges the Milwaukee Common Council to adopt this ordinance, which will vastly improve the safety of students around the city. We would like to extend our thanks to Alderman Perez for drafting this ordinance.

Chairman Witkowski and committee members, I thank you again for your time and attention. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at [lkindtsimpson@chw.org](mailto:lkindtsimpson@chw.org).

