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Mayor Fulop and Police Chief Zacche Announce Launch of “Operation STOP Sign” to Enforce Motor Vehicle Laws at Stopped School Buses

Jersey City Police Department Responds to Community Concerns About School Bus Safety as Fulop Administration Continues to Enhance Public Safety

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop and Jersey City Police Chief Philip Zacche announced today that Jersey City Police have increased traffic enforcement for motorists disregarding the flashing red light “STOP” signs on school buses, through “**Operation STOP Sign,**” after receiving complaints from concerned parents, school officials and members of the community.

“Operation STOP Sign” will target motorists who specifically disregard the flashing red light stop sign on school buses, which are intended to stop all vehicular traffic when loading and unloading children to and from the school bus.

“Our officers always enforce motor vehicle laws, and work to keep our children safe. This is a special police detail to specifically focus on school buses,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “This is one of the many ways we are listening to the community and implementing measures to address resident concerns.”

Under current New Jersey motor vehicle laws, drivers must stop 25 feet from a school bus when the red stop sign is out, and keep their vehicle stationary until the child or disabled person has entered the school bus or reached the side of the roadway, and the flashing red light is no longer exhibited.

“Disregarding any traffic signal is dangerous enough, but you increase that level of danger when pedestrians and children present are expecting motorists to stop and they don’t,” said **Chief Zacche**. “Keeping the community safe is our number one priority, with pedestrian safety for children and parents a key focus. We were pleased to work with the community on this issue to raise awareness and increase enforcement around school bus stops.”

Several drivers have already been issued summons since the increased enforcement began May 1. Uniformed and plainclothes officers from each precinct will concentrate on areas where children load and unload from school buses. This enforcement is not just restricted to one specific location or any designated time frame, but rather will be taking place throughout the city, anytime school buses drop off or pick up children at any hour of the day or any day of the week.

In an attempt to educate citizens and remind them about school bus safety, **Chief Zacche** instructed the JCPD’s Community Relations officers to educate the public on the laws at community meetings and other community-related events.

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“As a school bus operator myself, I’ve witnessed first-hand the danger our children have been exposed to by motorists who blatantly disregard the school bus stop sign,” said **Reverend David Webb, of Good News Bible Mission**. “I applaud and appreciate the Jersey City Police Department for taking on this initiative to address this growing concern. These children need a voice that will speak up for them on this issue, and I encourage the community to continue to work with JCPD regarding this matter.”

This stepped-up enforcement will continue throughout the summer, as Jersey City school buses transport children to summer camp programs and other activities.

If officers observe motorists disregarding the “STOP” sign and flashing red lights activated by a school bus, they will be issued a summons, as well as any additional violations committed by the motorist. The penalty for disregarding a school bus that is stopped and has the stop sign deployed may result in a fine no less than \$100.00, imprisonment for not more than 15 days, 5 points against the license, revocation of driver’s license, court fines, and community service for 15 or more days.

All media inquiries should be directed to Carly Baldwin, JCPD Public Information Officer at 201-547-4263 or 201-450-7132.////