

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 5, 2020

Contact: Denise Beck, METRO Marketing Manager
207-517-3027 / dbeck@gpmetro.org / gpmetro.org

Bill Requiring Motorists to Yield to Transit Buses in Maine Will Help Make Public Transit Safer in Greater Portland Region

(PORTLAND, ME) - Beginning November 15, 2020, seven Greater Portland METRO buses, equipped with “yield to bus” yellow lights, will have the right-of-way to merge into traffic.

[The “Act to Require Motorists to Yield to Transit Buses”](#) was signed by Governor Janet Mills in June 2019. METRO’s newest buses arrived over the summer of 2020 and are equipped with the required yellow yield signs. Bus operators will begin utilizing the new lights on November 15.



The "yield to buses" law states that motorists must yield if the public way has a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less, and the transit bus is equipped with a yield sign on the left side of the rear of the bus that illuminates to signal that it's reentering the traffic flow ([link to video](#)).

Several METRO bus operators testified for the Transportation Committee and worked with Sen. Ben Chipman, D-Portland, through the approval process of this bill ([LD458](#)). METRO Bus Operator Jonathan Cail said, “The biggest reason we’ve supported this law is because it’s safer for drivers and the public. The new bill will also help to keep our buses on schedule by making it easier to get in and out of traffic.”

In the absence of yield to bus ordinances, motorists may try to speed up and get around buses, which makes the roads more dangerous for motorists and pedestrians alike. With yield to bus policies in place, it will be clear that motorists must yield to a public transit bus that has indicated it is trying to merge back into traffic.

“We appreciate the work of METRO’s bus operators to help pass this important law and grateful for the support from Maine’s state legislature and Governor Mills,” said METRO Executive Director Greg Jordan. “This marks another step toward making public transit safer and more reliable throughout the state.”

Last month, METRO, along with transit partners Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit (BSOOB Transit) and South Portland Bus Service introduced a new fare system, [DiriGo TouchPass](#), that uses a mobile app and smartcards. The new system is a safer and contactless way for our riders to pay their fare, especially during a time of increased safety concerns.

METRO is the largest public transit agency in Maine, providing bus service to Brunswick, Falmouth, Freeport, Gorham, Portland, South Portland, Westbrook, and Yarmouth.

METRO information and updates:

- Website: gpmetro.org
- Phone: 207-774-0351
- E-Mail: Info@gpmetro.org
- DiriGo TouchPass Fare information: DiriGoTouchPass.org | 1- 833-272-7270
- Southern Maine Transit Tracker (listing of bus stops and ‘real time’ bus info) – SMTTRACKER.COM
- Social media: [Facebook](#); [Twitter](#); [Instagram](#)
- Sign up for METRO Connects [newsletter](#).

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