



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of the Chairman

July 16, 2019

The Honorable Janet T. Mills
Governor of Maine
1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor Mills:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge Maine to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your government can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our June 18, 2019, report *School Bus Run-Off-Road and Fire, Oakland, Iowa, December 12, 2017*, NTSB/HAR-19/01. The details of the accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of its investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- School bus driver fitness for duty, including physical performance tests and driver oversight by the Riverside Community School District.
- School bus fire safety, including fire suppression systems, fire-resistant interior materials, and federal fire safety performance standards.
- School bus emergency training, including evacuation drills and equipment.

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the state of Maine. Additional information regarding the recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Revise your school bus driver requirements so that all drivers must pass a physical performance test at least annually and also whenever a driver's physical condition changes in a manner that could affect his or her ability to

physically perform school bus driver duties, including helping passengers evacuate a bus in an emergency. (H-19-6) (See section 2.3.5.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement the recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (Safety Recommendation H-19-6). We encourage you to submit your response to ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov. If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Sumwalt, III
Chairman