



COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

Public Safety Committee

Date: May 26, 2015

Agenda Item #:3

Agenda Item: Discussion and possible action on an ordinance creating a camera-enforced civil offense for illegally passing a school bus.

Vote

Council Member Pool motioned to advance this item, seconded by Council Member Houston. Chair Zimmerman voted against. Vice Chair Casar was absent.

Original Sponsors/Department: Council Member Tovo

Summary of Discussion

AISD Representatives provided a review of this program. They have completed a pilot and said it was successful, however they did not give citation as they wanted to see if the problem existed before moving forward. They said the cost would be borne by any school district choosing to have a camera program and that citizens would get due process. Council Member Pool's biggest concern is that this is a ministerial action by the City of Austin, that the city has no responsibility other than to create the ability for the school district to adjudicate at a civil level of prosecution; that there is no requirement by the City to provide municipal court time and it won't be on our dockets. She would like a follow-up after a period of time if a school district proceeds with this. She has had similar concerns that were raised regarding the video that was shown by one of the public speakers at the meeting. She asked what liability, if any, will be in place for the City of Austin or is it entirely with the school district(s)? Chair Zimmerman asked about the entity that would be reviewing the video coverage and AISD said they would be using an AISD police officer to review it. City Law Department representative, John Steiner, reiterated that this Ordinance only allows a school district to set up a camera enforcement program. All the City is doing in this Ordinance is creating a civil offense if a school district sets up a camera enforced program. The City does not undertake any liability or enter into any agreements by approving the Ordinance. Council Member Houston commented that the issue that the opposition given by the attended public speakers has is with the school district, and not with the City of Austin, because it is about cost, adjudication and the due process. She encouraged them to voice their opposition at the school districts next board meeting.

Public Comments

Brad Parsons, Against Andrew Bucknall, Against (donated his time to Mr. Parsons) Mr. Parsons shared an investigative news video of a similar program that was put in place by a Dallas school district and the outcome of that program.

Direction

Forward to council with a recommendation for approval.