



NASSAU-SUFFOLK SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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August 28, 2008

**To: The Honorable David Paterson
Governor of the State of New York**

**From: Jim Kaden, President
Fran Greenspan, Legislation Committee Chair**

**Re: A. 9381 John/S. 5110 Little
School Crossing Guards**

On behalf of the 112 boards of education that comprise the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association, we are writing to urge you to veto A. 9381 (John)/S. 5110 (Little).

The School Crossing Guards legislation is just one more attempt by municipalities to unload an expense onto their local school districts. We would call it a hidden, unfunded mandate.

This bill enables local governments to simply cease paying school crossing guards while indicating that school districts have the authority to hire them. This “authority” would become a legal liability to school districts that may not have the resources for additional personnel. Should an accident occur, the district would be exposed to legal liability and public outcry for not maintaining a safe passage to school of their students.

There is sound reason behind current law prohibiting school districts from employing crossing guards. Unlike municipalities, school districts do not have the expertise in traffic patterns, accident rates, traffic load, timing of traffic signals and pedestrian volume required to adequately assess the need for crossing guards in any given locations.

Costly new employees, exposure to lawsuits and danger to children are not a basis for sound public policy. The desire of municipalities to rid themselves of the cost of public safety personnel is inappropriate.

We strongly urge you to reject this legislation.