

Memo

DATE: May 8, 2025
TO: Tom Ariola, Hamden Board of Education
FROM: Sue Gruen, Town Attorney
RE: Revised "Stop Arm Law" Monitoring Contract

You asked for a summary of the current "Stop Arm Law" and monitoring systems used to record drivers who illegally pass stopped school buses. In addition, you've asked for the status of the existing monitoring contract in light of a new version of the Stop Arm Law that was enacted by the General Assembly in 2024.

As you know, Public Act 24-107 terminated the ability of towns and boards to enter into new vendor agreements for "live digital video school bus violation detection monitoring systems" – i.e., systems that record a broad range of video concerning violators when violations occur (referred to here as the "Old System"). Instead, P.A. 24-107 allowed towns to utilize a "municipal school bus violation enforcement system" (the "New System") with more restrictive monitoring features limited to the recording the violator's license plate and other pertinent information. For towns currently using the Old System, P.A. 24-107 effectively terminates existing vendor contracts as of July, 2026.

My understanding is that in 2011, the Town and Board entered into a contract for the Old System with a company called SmartBus Live. That contract has subsequently been taken over by successors, most recently by a company called Verity. After my review of the existing contract, if the Town and Board wish to terminate its Old System contract, you may do so under any of three scenarios:

1. The contract specifies that if the original legislative act that allowed for the adoption of the Old System (P.A. 11-255) is amended or repealed, the Town may terminate immediately.
2. Because the contract makes no provision for assignment, the Town can argue that it has no obligations to any successors to the original contract and therefore may terminate immediately.
3. The contract has a 30-day notice of termination without cause.

Accordingly, if the Town and Board wish to terminate and seek a new vendor for the New System, I would recommend sending a notice letter to whomever the Board is currently in contact to notify them of termination effective immediately. The worst case is that the contract might continue into June.

One additional note: Public Act 24-107 requires the Town to adopt an ordinance to govern the implementation of the New System. It also specifies that no such ordinance may be adopted if the town is still operating the Old System. Therefore, it's imperative that the Town and Board formally terminate the existing contract before the Legislative Council takes up a new ordinance for the adoption of the New System.

cc: Mayor Lauren Garrett