

Goal is safety for students riding buses

DEARABBY: I am writing about the letter from "Concerned Driver in Oklahoma." "Concerned" said that drivers must stop for school buses that are stopped with their red lights flashing "even when going in the opposite direction on a divided four-lane highway." That's not true in Virginia. These laws vary by state, Abby. — ALICE TEW, FAIRFAX, VA.

DEARALICE: Thanks for point-



abigail van buren

• dear abby

ing that out. So far, I have heard from readers in Illinois, Washington, Ohio, Georgia, Pennsylvania and California telling me that the law does not apply in their state, either. It seems the bus driver misinterpreted the law in Oklahoma, too. Read on:

DEARABBY: This is in response to the letter from "Concerned Bus Driver in Oklahoma" that recently appeared in your column. Our pri-

mary concern is — and always will be — the safety of our students.

"Concerned" interpreted Oklahoma Statute 47-705 incorrectly. The statute states that drivers are NOT required to stop if traveling in the opposite direction upon a separate portion of the roadway.

Additionally, I have communicated with officials at the Oklahoma Department of Education. They encourage school districts not to place bus stops on or along a divided highway. However, if they must, the stops should be established only where the students would not be required to cross the dividing strip and separate portion of the highway. — LT. CHRIS WEST, DIRECTOR OF

PUBLIC INFORMATION, OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

DEAR LT. WEST: Thank you for setting the record straight. You folks at the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety are on the ball. And it looks like you have your work cut out for you. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I live in a small town in Oklahoma where kids ride bikes to and from school. They do not seem to believe that stop signs are meant for them as well as for cars and trucks. They do not realize that traffic rules and regulations are for everyone, and that looking both ways and not stopping isn't good enough.

I called the local elementary school and told them to remind students, teachers and parents that one of those kids on bikes could get hurt or worse. Should something like that happen, the parents of the bike rider would blame the driver and not take into account that the child failed to stop at the stop sign.

Please remind kids and their parents that stop signs are for ALL traffic — not just for cars and trucks. It might save a life. — ALSO CONCERNED IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR ALSO CONCERNED: Children on bicycles who do not obey the law are a concern in every city. You're absolutely right that stop signs are for everyone. And those

who fail to heed them could be maimed or killed. Please, parents and educators, make it a point to remind your youngsters of that fact repeatedly.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I recently attended a couples wedding shower for my boss's daughter and her fiancé. They sent us a lovely thank-you note, but it was for the wrong gift. Should I say something? I don't want to embarrass anybody. — WONDERING IN LOUISIANA

DEAR WONDERING: Call your boss's daughter and gently explain what happened. It's possible the gift cards got mixed up. It's nothing to be embarrassed about, and she needs to know.

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