

# Senate sets aside \$5.5 Million from budget surplus for CSN's School Bus Safety Plans SB22-085, now called Anna's Law

*Sen. James Coleman Awarded 2022 Colorado Safe Student Protection Award. Child Safety Network's highest honor for taking direct action to save student's lives.*

DENVER, COLORADO, UNITED STATES, April 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Senators James Coleman (D) and Don Coram (R) presented bipartisan Amendment 16 to the State's budget. Overwhelming support will provide \$5.5 Million to help make Colorado the Safest State in the Nation for Students.

Colorado Senator James Coleman helped add the \$5.5 million for the first year of the Child Safety Network's three-year plan to protect 980,000 Colorado students and provide 3 million Colorado adults with free resources that will allow them to avoid public safety hazards, find safe evacuation routes (based on their locations) and more.

For those adults with children and grandchildren, the app will help them learn to prevent their children from becoming victims of abuse abduction, bullying, injury and even trafficking. The new app will also cover a wide variety or age appropriate parenting challenges, including cyber security and how to raise healthier children, both physically and mentally.

CSN spent three years working with Colorado's top experts to develop the most comprehensive plan ever presented to the state to make certain students get to school and home safely. Plans are to pilot the program in Colorado and then allow every state to opt-in for CSN's new technology, training and strategies. CSN says this program will make students at least twice as safe as they are now while providing free resources never before made available to parents.



Colorado Senator James Coleman helps add \$5.5 million to Child Safety Network's plan to protect 980,000 Colorado students

Anna's Mom speaks out on this video: <https://vimeo.com/693540912>

“Early this session, my committee heard testimony from representatives of the Child Safety Network group advocating for a program they hope will help make Colorado a leader in the nation for bus safety, security, and student protection. Senate State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee Chair, Senator James Coleman (D-Denver) added: “Equally passionate were the parents who doubled down on those needs, and it seemed there was an opportunity to make that happen for them through the state budget. I was honored to pass a budget amendment to help kick off this program, but more importantly, I am proud to make yet another investment in our children.”

**SENATE SPONSORS**

Senator **Don Coram** Transportation  
 Senator **Rachel Zenzinger** Chair of Education  
 Rep. **Barbara McLachlan** Chair of Education  
 Rep. **Marc Catlin** Transportation

**HOUSE SPONSORS**

Rep. **Ward Leber** Lead Program Facilitator, Public Safety Expert, Life-Long Child Advocate, Founder & Chair of CSN  
 Rep. **Otha Thornton, Jr.** School / Parent Coordinator, Past National PTA President, Fmr. White House Communications Under Pres. Bush & Obama  
 Rep. **Bill Arrington** School Bus Security, Nationally responsible for all surface transportation security for DHS/TSA  
 Rep. **Detective Daniel Sperry** Stop Arm Campaign Director, 11-year-old daughter Makaya killed by Stop Arm runner  
 Rep. **Greg Jackson** Transportation Oversight, Voted #1 Transportation Director in America (Letfco)  
 Rep. **Frank Tyneski** App Product Design & Experience, Top 10 Global Product Designer, 100+ Patents  
 Rep. **Michael Lloyd** App Content, Entertainment, Entertainment Industry Icon, Produced over 100 Gold & Platinum records, Celebrity Liaison for Colo Campaign  
 Rep. **Leandra Backner** Anna's Mother, Project Oversight  
 Rep. **Brandon Backner** Anna's Father, Project Oversight

**PROGRAM FACILITATORS**

Fmr. Assistant Dir. of Secret Service  
 School Bus Accident Reduction, Safety Manager for over 38,000 school buses, #1 Safety Trainer in the US  
 Anti Bullying SME, Content Provider for K-12, No Bullies On Board Programs  
 Gent Support Coordinator, Professor & Dir. Princeton & Rutgers, Native American Author & Teacher  
 School Bus Security & Safety, President of the Colorado State Pupil Transportation Association  
 School Bus Driver Shortage, Voted #1 Transportation Director in America (Letfco)

**Anna's Law SAFE STUDENT PROTECTION PROGRAM**

**Parental Notification & Student Safety App**  
 Parents receive secure notifications of school bus arrivals or delays, enjoy free expert age-appropriate resources to raise safer, healthier students, and avoid known public safety hazards.

**Statewide Anti-Stop Arm Runner Campaign**  
 Motorists legally pass our school buses more than 200,000 times per school year placing our students in harms way.

**Fewer Accidents, Injuries & Lawsuits**  
 Colorado averages less than 12 school bus accidents per day, over 350 per year. Proven technology and advanced driver training reduces accidents by as much as 50%. Driver Background Checks & Security Training are a must.

**Faster Response Times Saves Lives**  
 Silent Alarm & Crash Detection alerts first responders to the exact location of the bus. FDIC Insured Buses have silent alarms, but not our school buses. It's time to change that oversight.

**Help Solve The School Bus Driver Shortage**  
 The School Bus Driver shortage was at crisis levels (nationwide) before Covid. 50% of all Colorado School Districts asked for help in 2019. New strategies will attract new drivers.

**Less Pollution for Colorado & Students**  
 Smart technology reduces emissions and thereby less exposure to students & staff. Especially important during a pandemic that attacks the respiratory system.

**Reduce On-Board Bullying**  
 375,000 Colorado students ride the bus. None should be afraid to use the safest form of transportation. The "No-Bullies On Board" campaign will reduce the number of incidences currently averaging 125,000 per year.

**Corporate Sponsors Increase Grant Funds**  
 The Safe Student Protection Act is designed to provide incentives for school board approved corporate sponsors to add funding to the program.

**WATCH THE FULL PROGRAM** **csn.org**

CSN spent three years working with Colorado to develop the most comprehensive plan to make certain students get to school and home safely

Senator Coleman added: “I admired CSN's dedication to the program's success and their willingness to facilitate this groundbreaking program on a volunteer basis. They want to make Colorado the gold standard in student safety and transportation, so saving their funding was also a means of saving our children and youth.”

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“I want each and every Senator that voted for this amendment to know, that your actions have meant the world to my family and I. It means that my daughter's death will not be in vain.”

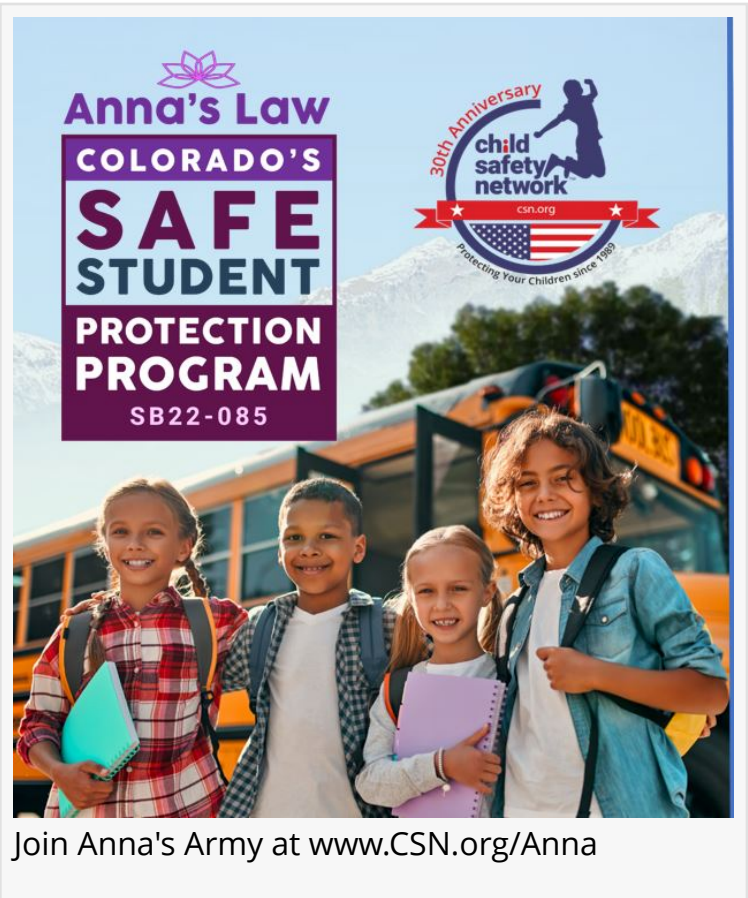
– Leandra Backner

SB22-085, The Safe Student Protection Program, is now known as Anna's Law. The change to the bill title is in recognition of 11-year-old Anna Backner, who lost her life when she was tragically killed by her own school bus. Her grieving mother, Leandra, offered her heartfelt gratitude to

Senators Coleman and Coram as she stated:

“I want both of you to know along with each and every Senator that voted for this amendment, that your actions have meant the world to my family and me. It means that my daughter's death will not be in vain. It means that my sweet Annaliese will be part of a plan to protect all students in Colorado, so that no parent has to go through the pain and loss that we are experiencing now, and for years to come. Thank you Senators for restoring my faith in the priorities of our state's leadership. If Anna were here today, she would want to hug you all and thank you for helping her friends get to school and home safely every day. God Bless you for protecting our children.” – Leandra Backner

Ward Leber, Founder and CEO of CSN has added Senator James Coleman to the list of lawmakers to be honored with the 2022 Colorado Safe Student Protection Award. The first four awards were presented at the Colorado Association of School Boards Winter Legislative Conference. Attendees of that conference representing school districts throughout Colorado listened as Cheri Wrench, Executive Director of the Colorado Association of School Boards, (\*CASB"), said: "On behalf of the Colorado Association of School Boards, I wish to congratulate Senate Education Chair Rachel Zenzinger, House Education Chair, Barbara McLachlan, Senator Don Coram, Representative Marc Catlin and the Child Safety Network for collaborating with CASB members in an effort that can make our schools and our students safer and more secure".



Regarding the recent honor, Senator Coleman said: "I am proud to accept the 2022 Colorado Safe Student Protection Award; and I will continue to stand with parents as they entrust us to protect the futures of our children, our youth, and our beautiful state."

[watch this 10-minute video on the bill's three-year history: https://vimeo.com/681065965](https://vimeo.com/681065965)

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