

Governor signs into law bill to ban bus idling

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JERICHO, Vt. --Gov. Jim Douglas has signed into law a bill to ban school buses from idling while parked on school grounds.

The governor signed the bill at the Browns River Middle School where a seventh grade social studies class conceived of the idea to ban idling as a way to save fuel and protect the environment.

"This is a great step forward for our state," Douglas said.

"There is a lot of talk in the media about climate change and what we can do about it," he said.

He thanked the students for focusing on reducing emissions from motor vehicles, because in Vermont, "nearly half our contribution to greenhouse gases comes from motor vehicles."

Throughout the legislative session the students argued the merits of banning idling.

"Schools will save over \$300,000 that would have been spent on fuel for buses that are idling," said Mikaela Osler during the signing ceremony.

"You just helped the health of 75,000 school-age children," said Dakotah Patnode.

In addition to banning idling, the new law asks the Department of Education to develop a model policy to encourage school districts to restrict idling on school grounds by all vehicles.

Information from: The Burlington Free Press, <http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com> ■