



August 15, 2022

Dear Superintendent:

The Greater New Jersey Motorcoach Association (<http://gnjma.com/>) was founded in 1981 and has functioned without interruption and with an unrelenting commitment to the safety of the traveling public and the economic well-being of its member companies. GNJMA boasts a well-rounded program of activities for both bus operator and supplier members and carries a current membership of over 150 entities. Governmental affairs, travel and tourism marketing, education, safety, and communication constitute the major areas of involvement for this.

Over the last year, our operators have noticed an increase of school groups being left behind; without transportation and with last minute needs. Upon investigation, we have noticed a concerning pattern. A majority of the last-minute cancellations were coming from trips that were booked through bus brokers.

Broker companies are organizations who do not own buses, nor have maintenance facilities. They do not have their own drivers, mechanics, or live, on-call, emergency numbers. They outsource all of their work to whichever bus company gives them the lowest bid, often booking them without checking to see if the company is insured, or up to date on their safety and regulatory compliance with state and federal regulations.

Worse, we believe that schools are unaware they are even using a broker when they transact business. Brokers have artfully created websites that widely advertise charter motorcoach services to make it seem like they own their own buses. Brokers have no risk, insurance, accountability and when they receive a booking, they scramble to find a bus company to work with. Often, they are not able to find one of the most legitimate companies, as legitimate companies are hesitant to work with brokers. Brokers are known for not paying their trips and they do not provide complete itineraries. This leads to the group getting stranded, and it is last minute.

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Our members are proud of their service and safety and in the interest of providing your students with the best; we wanted to provide you with additional information to help make the best decisions. We urge you and your group coordinators to do ample research before boarding his or her groups onto a bus that may be unsafe, or not insured. A simple google search can go a long way. Ask the company you are booking with for a certificate of insurance. Lookup their safety score on the FMCSA's website (<https://safer.fmcsa.dot.gov/CompanySnapshot.aspx>). Ask them if the bus, which will be used, is in fact owned by that company.

GNJMA hopes that by providing you with this information we can make progress toward avoiding future cancelled trips and disappointing any more students. We hope that this message gets to the school personnel who make transposition decisions at the school level. Please advise if we can pass on any further information to aid your district with its transportation needs, or setup a call to discuss further.

Sincerely,



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