AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 63-3-615, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO CREATE A REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION THAT THE OWNER OF A VEHICLE THAT PASSES A SCHOOL BUS ILLEGALLY WAS THE DRIVER OF THE VEHICLE AT THE TIME OF THE ALLEGED VIOLATION UPON AFFIDAVIT OF THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER PRESENTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS HAVING APPROPRIATE JURISDICTION; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 63-3-615, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

63-3-615. (1) The driver of a vehicle upon a street or highway upon meeting or overtaking any school bus which has stopped on the street or highway for the purpose of receiving or discharging any school children shall come to a complete stop and shall not proceed until the children have crossed the street or highway and the school bus has proceeded in the direction it was going. If the driver of the school bus provides a law enforcement officer or law enforcement agency having appropriate jurisdiction with a sworn affidavit identifying the license plate number, a description of the vehicle and the date, time and location where a violation of this section is alleged to have occurred, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the owner of the vehicle was the driver of the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation and such owner may be charged with a violation of this section.

(2) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not less than Two Hundred Dollars ($200.00) nor more than Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00), or imprisoned for not more than one (1) year, or both.
(3) This section shall be applicable only in the event the school bus shall bear upon the front and rear thereon a plainly visible sign containing the words "school bus" in letters not less than four (4) inches in height.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001.