

May 2022
FL921A
NHTSA #22V-153

Subject: Thomas Built Buses EFX Seat Bolts

Models Affected: Specific model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Saf-T-Liner EFX school buses manufactured June 6, 2019, through November 30, 2021.

General Information

Daimler Truck North America LLC (DTNA), on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, Thomas Built Buses (TBB) has decided that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety exists on the vehicles mentioned above.

On the affected EFX school buses, certain passenger seats have a mounting bolt that may contact a chassis cross-member bolt which can cause fatigue from vibration and side loading. A broken seat mounting bolt may impact the ability of the seat to meet the seat and belt requirements of FMVSS 210 and/or FMVSS 222.

Spacers will be added between the frame rail and body floor in the affected area of the bus to provide proper clearance between the passenger seat mounting bolt and the chassis cross member bolt. Repairs will be performed by Daimler Truck North America authorized service facilities.

There are approximately 539 vehicles involved in this campaign.

Additional Repairs

Dealers must complete all outstanding Recall and Field Service campaigns prior to the sale or delivery of a vehicle. A Dealer will be liable for any progressive damage that results from its failure to complete campaigns before sale or delivery of a vehicle.

Owners may be liable for any progressive damage that results from failure to complete campaigns within a reasonable time after receiving notification.

Work Instructions

Please refer to the attached work instructions.

Replacement Parts

Replacement parts are now available and can be obtained by ordering the part number(s) listed below from your facing Parts Distribution Center.

If our records show your dealership has ordered any vehicle(s) involved in campaign number FL921, a list of the customers and vehicle identification numbers will be available on DTNAConnect. Please refer to this list when ordering parts for this recall.

Table 1 - Replacement Parts for FL921

| Campaign Number | Part Description | Part Number | Qty. |
|-----------------------------|--|--------------|------|
| FL921A | SHIM BASE PLATE, ASSEMBLY | TBB 235016 | 2 ea |
| | BODY CLIP, J-HOOK | TBB 185130 | 8 ea |
| | ROD, HOOK, 7/16 - 14 | TBB 232967 | 4 ea |
| | WASHER, FLAT, . 500 ID, I . 630 OD | TBB 173796 | 6 ea |
| | LOCKNUT 7/16- 14 PREVAILING | TBB 29940038 | 4 ea |
| | SHIM BRACKET | TBB 235017 | 2 ea |
| | WASHER, FLAT, .531 ID, 1.062 OD | 23-09114-003 | 2 ea |
| | BODY CLIP, J-HOOK, WIDE OPENING | TBB 235162 | 2 ea |
| | SEAT MOUNTING BOLT, GRADE 8, 4.00 INCH | TBB 216585 | 2 ea |
| | SEAT MOUNTING BOLT, GRADE 8, 4.50 INCH | TBB 216586 | 2 ea |
| FLANGE NUT, 7/16-14 GRADE 8 | TBB 233162 | 2 ea | |

Table 1

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Removed Parts

U.S. and Canadian Dealers, please follow Warranty Failed Parts Tracking shipping instructions for the disposition of all removed parts. Export distributors, please destroy removed parts unless otherwise advised.

Labor Allowance

Table 2 - Labor Allowance

| Campaign Number | Procedure | Time Allowed (hours) | SRT Code | Corrective Action |
|-----------------|--|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| FL921A | INSTALL BODY SHIMS FOR SEAT BOLT CLEARANCE | 4.5 | 996-R142A | 12-Repair Recall/Campaign |

Table 2

Claims for Credit

You will be reimbursed for your parts, labor, and handling (landed cost for Export Distributors) by submitting your claim through the Warranty system within 30 days of completing this campaign. Please reference the following information in OWL:

- Claim type is **Recall Campaign**.
- In the Campaign field, enter the campaign number and appropriate condition code (**FL921-A**).
- In the Primary Failed Part Number field, enter **25-FL921-000**.
- In the Parts field, enter the appropriate part number(s) as shown in the Replacement Parts Table.
- In the Labor field, first enter the appropriate SRT from the Labor Allowance Table. Administrative time will be included automatically as SRT 939-6010A for 0.3 hours.
- The VMRS Component Code is **F99-999-005** and the Cause Code is **A1 - Campaign**.
- **U.S. and Canada -- Reimbursement for Prior Repairs.** When a customer asks about reimbursement, please do the following:
 - Accept the documentation of the previous repair.
 - Make a brief check of the customer's paperwork to see if the repair may be eligible for reimbursement. (See the "Copy of Owner Letter" section of this bulletin for reimbursement guidelines.)
 - Submit an OWL Recall Pre-Approval Request for a decision.
 - Include the approved amount on your claim in the Other Charges section.
 - Attach the documentation to the pre-approval request.
 - If approved, submit a based on claim for the pre-approval.
 - Reimburse the customer the appropriate amount.

IMPORTANT: OWL must be viewed prior to performing the recall to ensure the vehicle is involved and the campaign has not been previously completed.

U.S. and Canadian dealers, contact the Warranty Campaigns Department via Web inquiry at DTNACconnect.com/WSC, if you have any questions or need additional information. Export distributors, submit a Web inquiry or contact your International Service Manager.

U.S. and Canadian Dealers: To return excess kit inventory related to this campaign, U.S. dealers must submit a Parts Authorization Return (PAR) to the Memphis PDC. Canadian dealers must submit a PAR to their facing PDC. All kits must be in resalable condition. PAR requests must include the original purchase invoice number. Export Distributors: Excess inventory is not returnable.

The letter notifying U.S. and Canadian vehicle owners is included for your reference.

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Please note that the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, as amended (Title 49, United States Code, Chapter 301), requires the owner's vehicle(s) be corrected within a reasonable time after parts are available to you. The Act states that failure to repair a vehicle within 60 days after tender for repair shall be prima facie evidence of an unreasonable time. However, circumstances of a particular situation may reduce the 60 day period. Failure to repair a vehicle within a reasonable time can result in either the obligation to (a) replace the vehicle with an identical or reasonably equivalent vehicle, without charge, or (b) refund the purchase price in full, less a reasonable allowance for depreciation. The Act further prohibits dealers from selling a vehicle unless all outstanding recalls are performed. Any lessor is required to send a copy of the recall notification to the lessee within 10 days. Any subsequent stage manufacturer is required to forward this notice to its distributors and retail outlets within five working days.

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Copy of Notice to Owners

Subject: Thomas Built Buses EFX Seat Bolts

For the Notice to U.S. Customers: This notice is sent to you in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Daimler Truck North America LLC (DTNA), on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, Thomas Built Buses, has decided that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety exists on specific model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Saf-T-Liner EFX school buses manufactured June 6, 2019, through November 30, 2021.

On the affected EFX school buses, certain passenger seats have a mounting bolt that may contact a chassis cross-member bolt which can cause fatigue from vibration and side loading. A broken seat mounting bolt may impact the ability of the seat to meet the seat and belt requirements of FMVSS 210 and/or FMVSS 222.

Spacers will be added between the frame rail and body floor in the affected area of the bus to provide proper clearance between the passenger seat mounting bolt and the chassis cross member bolt. Repairs will be performed by Daimler Truck North America authorized service facilities.

Please contact an authorized Daimler Truck North America dealer to arrange to have the Recall performed and to ensure that parts are available at the dealership. The Recall will take approximately five hours and will be performed at no charge to you. To locate an authorized dealer, search online at <https://northamerica.daimlertruck.com/contact-us/>. Scroll down to "Locate a Dealer," and select the appropriate brand. You may also confirm your vehicle's involvement in this recall at this URL: <https://dtna-dlrinfo.prd.freightliner.com:48518/VinLookup/vin-module/getVinLookupPage>.

You may be liable for any progressive damage that results from your failure to complete the Recall within a reasonable time after receiving notification.

If you do not own the vehicle that corresponds to the identification number(s) which appears on the Recall Notification, please return the notification to the Warranty Campaigns Department in the postage-paid envelope with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. If you have leased this vehicle, Federal law requires that you forward this notice to the lessee within 10 days. If you are a subsequent stage manufacturer, Federal law requires that you forward this notice to your distributors and retail outlets within five working days. If you have paid to have this recall condition corrected prior to this notice, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement. Please see the reverse side of this notice for details.

If you have questions about this Recall, please contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 547-0712, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, e-mail address dtna.warranty.campaigns@daimlertruck.com. **For the Notice to U.S. Customers:** If you are not able to have the defect remedied without charge and within a reasonable time, you may wish to submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590; or call the Vehicle Safety Hotline at (888) 327-4236 (TTY: 800-424-9153); or to <http://www.safercar.gov>. **For the Notice to Canadian Customers:** If you wish to submit a complaint about this recall, you can contact Transport Canada road safety, 80 rue Noel, Gatineau, Quebec J8Z 0A1 or call (800) 333-0510.

We regret any inconvenience this action may cause but feel certain you understand our interest in motor vehicle safety.

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Enclosure

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Reimbursement to Customers for Repairs Performed Prior to Recall

If you have already **paid** to have this recall condition corrected you may be eligible to receive reimbursement.

Requests for reimbursement may include parts and labor. Reimbursement may be limited to the amount the repair would have cost if completed by an authorized Daimler Truck North America LLC dealer. The following documentation must be presented to your dealer for consideration for reimbursement.

Please provide original or clear copies of all receipts, invoices, and repair orders that show:

- The name and address of the person who paid for the repair
- The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) of the vehicle that was repaired
- What problem occurred, what repair was done, when the repair was done
- Who repaired the vehicle
- The total cost of the repair expense that is being claimed
- Proof of payment for the repair (such as the front and back of a cancelled check or a credit card receipt)

Reimbursement will be made by check from your Daimler Truck North America LLC dealer.

Please speak with your Daimler Truck North America LLC authorized dealer concerning this matter.

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Work Instructions

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Models Affected: Specific model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Saf-T-Liner EFX school buses manufactured June 6, 2019, through November 30, 2021.

1. Place the vehicle on a lift, but do not raise the vehicle at this time.
2. Turn the main power disconnect switch to the OFF position, then remove the negative battery cable.
3. Raise the vehicle to a comfortable working height, as shown in [Fig. 1](#), to access the body clips.



Fig. 1, Raised Vehicle

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- Starting from the rear bumper, remove the two rear shear bolts, and the body mounting clips till approximately two window sections in front of the rear axle. See [Fig. 2](#) and [Fig. 3](#). The number of body mounting clips may vary depending on the vehicles option content, and length.

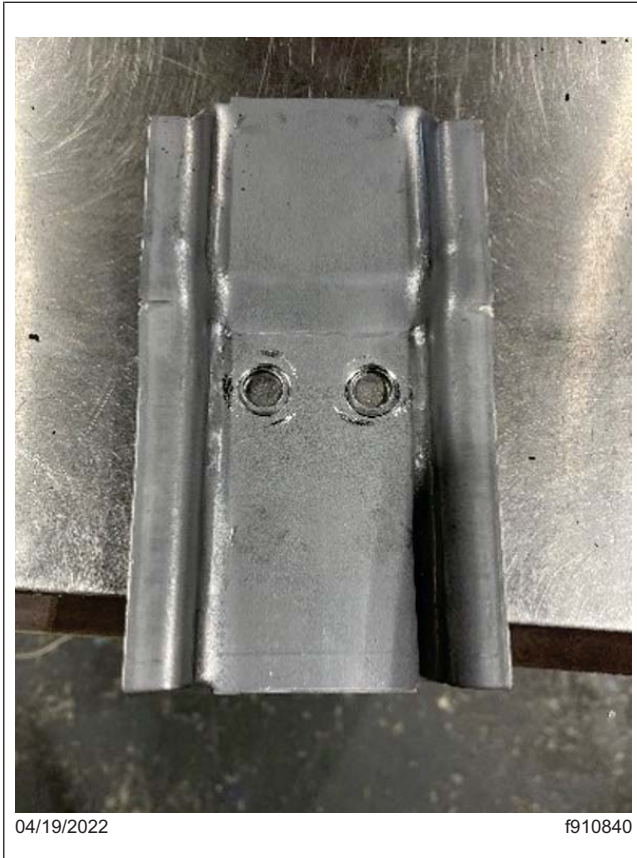


Fig. 2, Body Mounting Clip

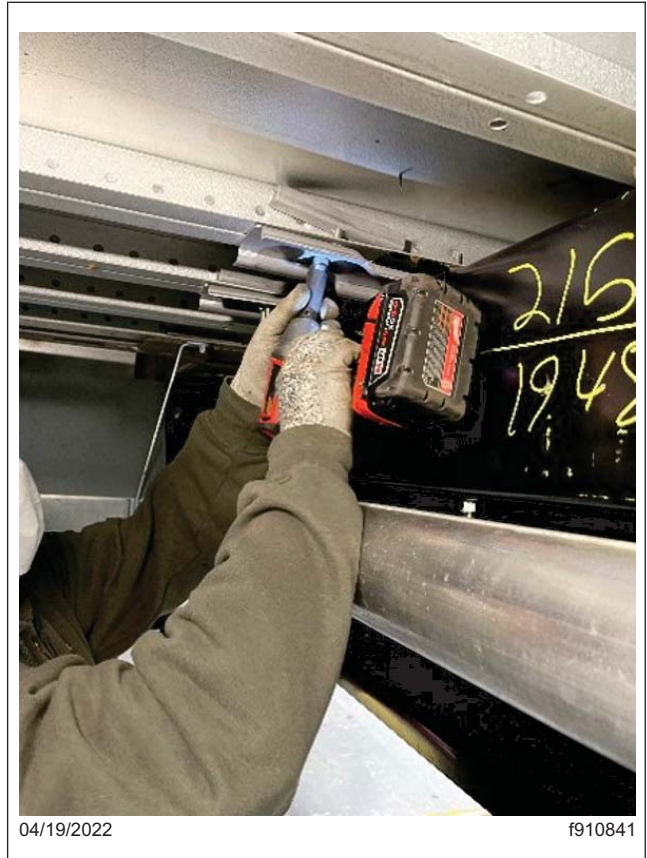


Fig. 3, Body Mounting Clip Removal

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- Using two jack stands and heavy gage square stock tubing, support the bus body on the left-hand side and the right-hand side behind the rear axle, as shown in [Fig. 4](#).
- With the body now supported, gently lower the chassis to gain approximately 4 to 6 inches of clearance between the top of the rear bumper and the body, as shown in [Fig. 5](#).

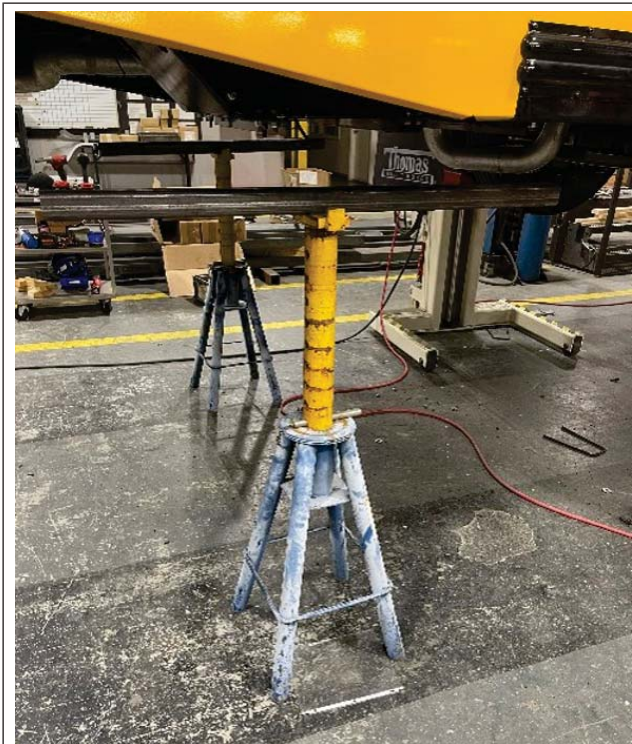
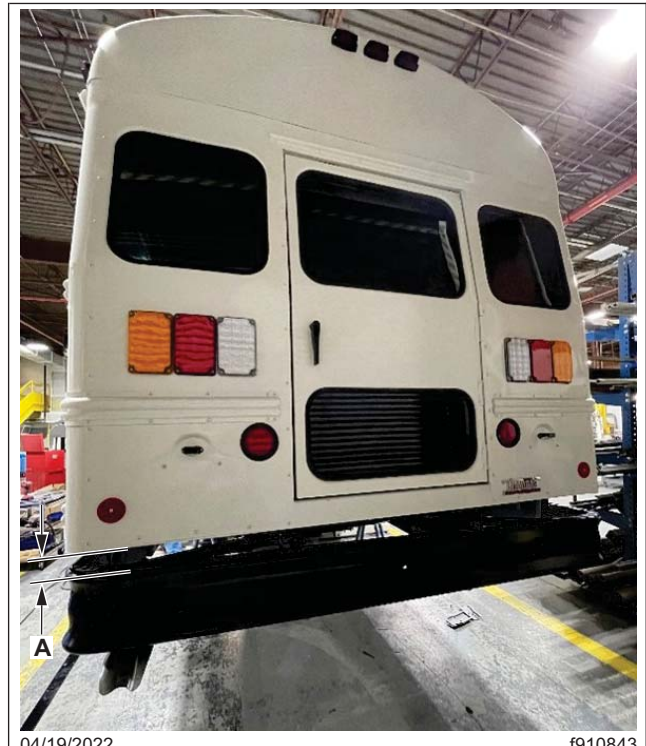


Fig. 4, Supporting the Bus Body



- A. Maintain a clearance of 4 to 6 inches between the bumper and the body.

Fig. 5, Gap Between the Bumper and the Body

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7. The shim is stepped with one side flat from end to end as, shown in Fig. 6 and Fig. 7. Make sure the shim is installed with the flat side down on the frame, as shown in Fig. 8.

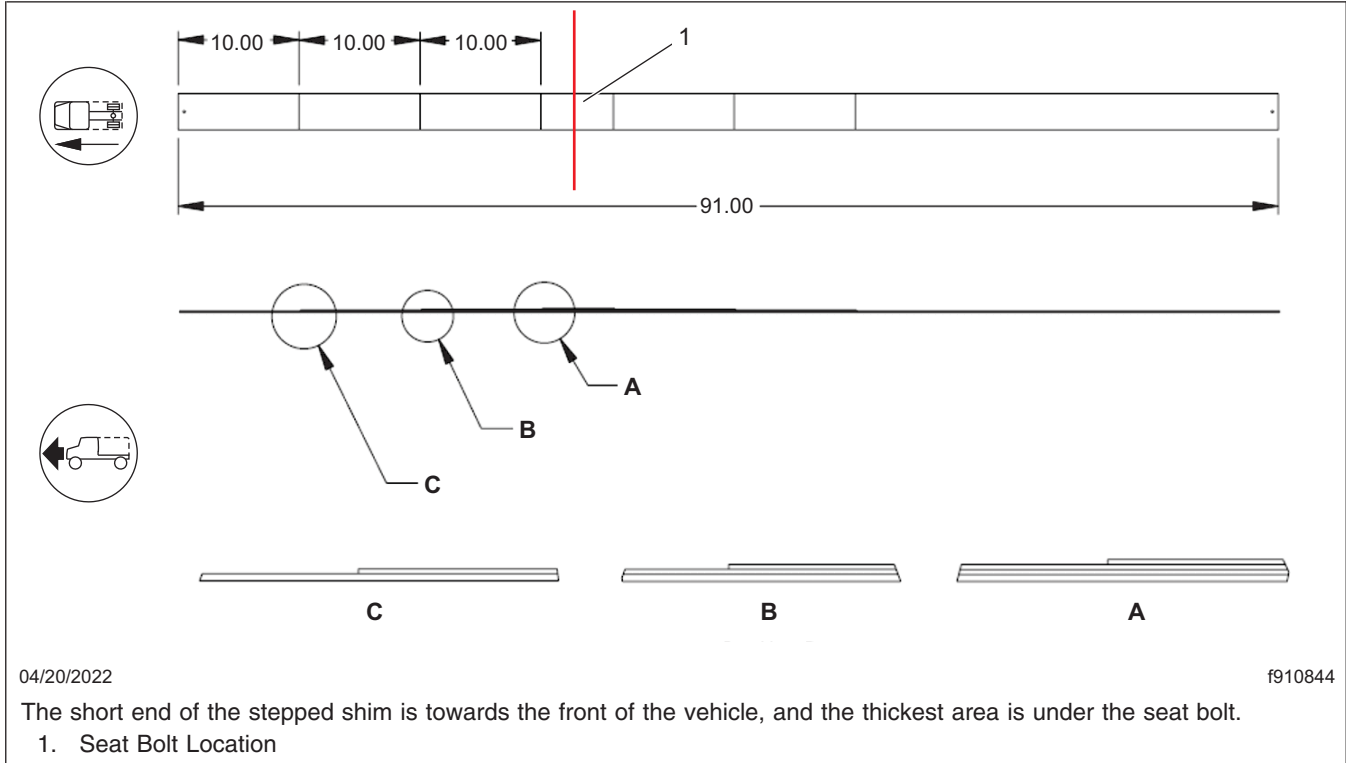
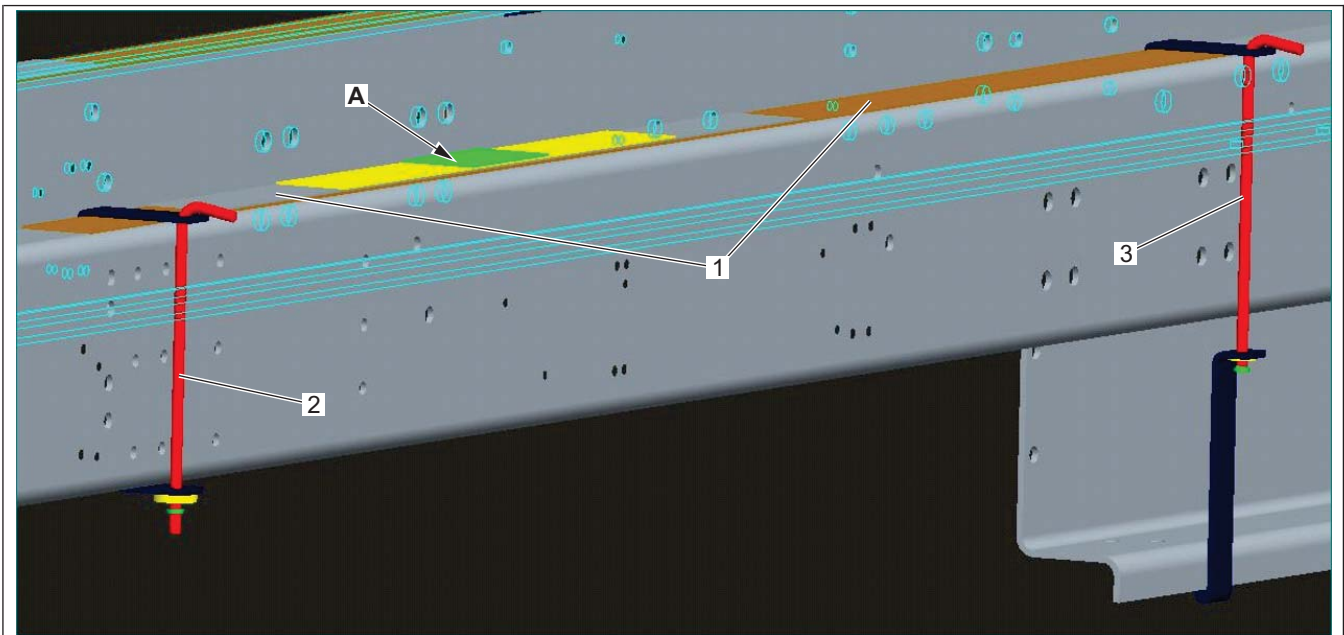


Fig. 6, Stepped Shim



Fig. 7, Shim, Black Powder Coated

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A. Install the shim with the flat side down on the frame.

1. Stepped Shim

2. Front J-Hook

3. Rear J-Hook

Fig. 8, Shim Installed on the Left-Hand Side Frame Rail

NOTICE

On vehicles where AC hoses, harnesses, and power cables are encountered, secure these components so that no chafing occurs or they are not in close proximity to heat. Do NOT pull wires tight at connectors. For instructions, see service bulletin 00-8, Routing and Clipping Tips for Extending School Bus Life.

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IMPORTANT: The proper location of a shim is with its short end toward the front of the vehicle, and its center directly under the seat bolt, as shown in **Fig. 9**. This is the thickest area of the shim, providing the maximum clearance between the frame and the seat bolt.

8. Install one shim on the top of each frame rail flange as follows:
 - 8.1 Pass the shim (short end first) through the top of the wheel well opening, as shown in **Fig. 10**.
 - 8.2 Manipulate, and place the shim on top of the frame rail flange, with the shim sandwiched between the body crossmembers.
9. Repeat step 8 on the other side of the vehicle.

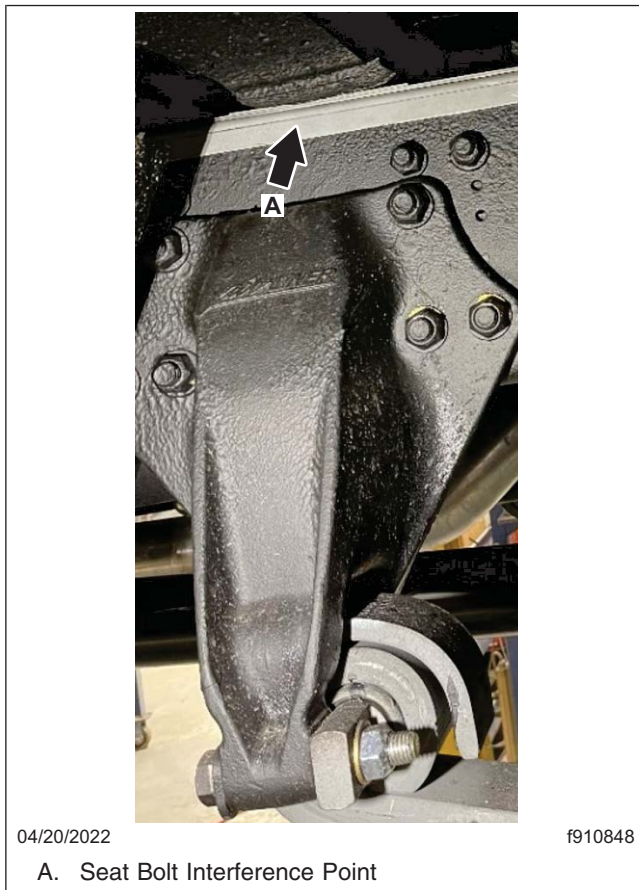


Fig. 9, Center of the Shim Located Under the Seat Bolt

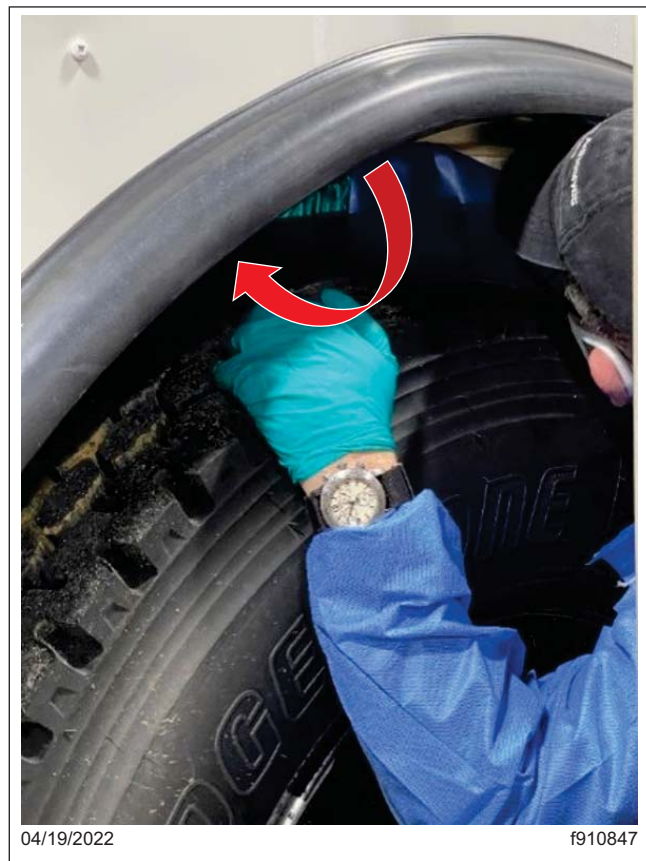


Fig. 10, Inserting the Shim Through Top of the Wheel Well Opening

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10. Install the front and rear J-hook brackets. Make sure the top brackets are seated on top of the ends of the shim, as shown in **Fig. 11** and **Fig. 8**.

IMPORTANT: If necessary, reposition the J-hooks or shim to fully capture the end of the shim under the J-hook bracket.

11. Install the J-hooks. Tighten each J-hook nut until the top and bottom bracket deforms approximately 1/8 to 1/4 inch, as shown in **Fig. 12**, then stop tightening the nut.

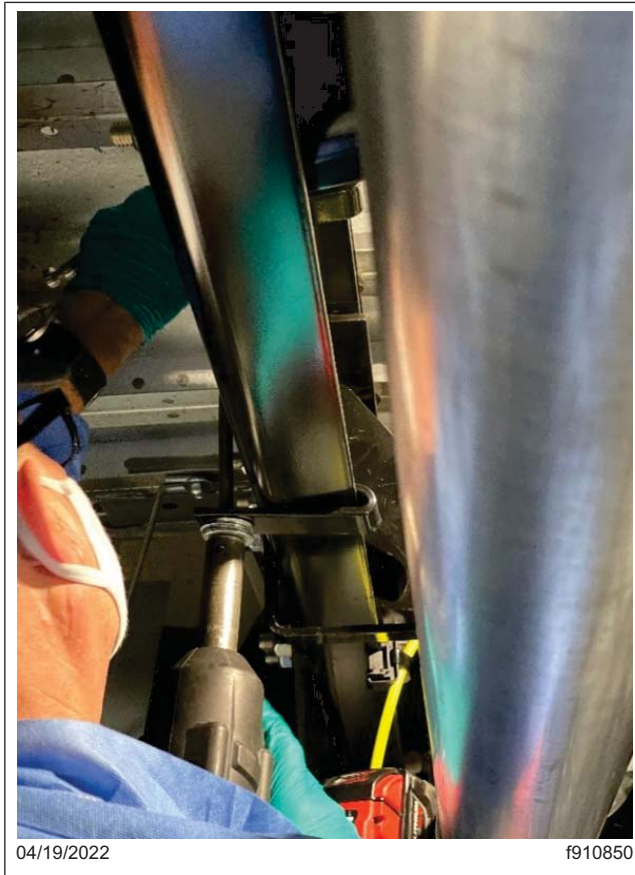
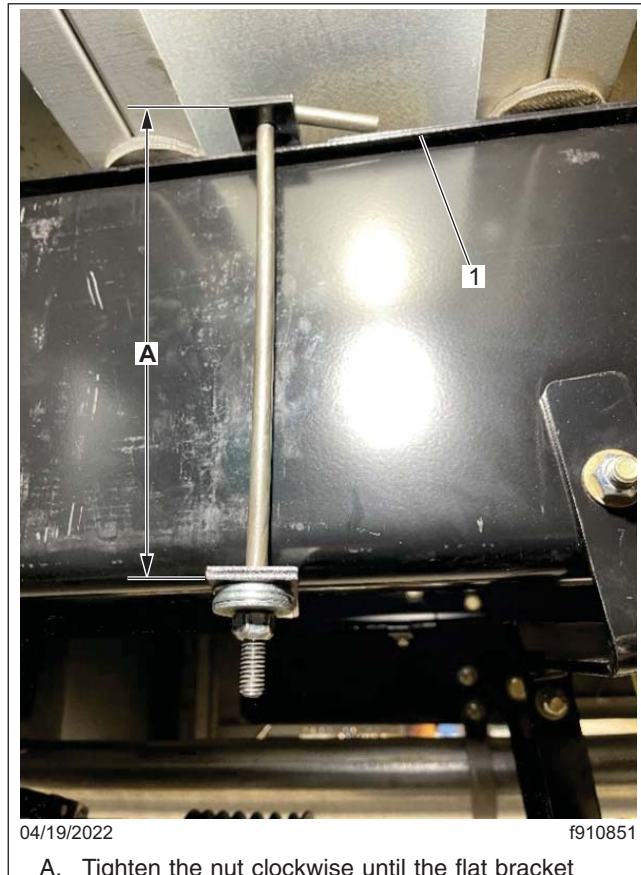


Fig. 11, J-Hook Installation



- A. Tighten the nut clockwise until the flat bracket ends deform approximately 1/8 to 1/4 inch.
- 1. Shim

Fig. 12, Front J-Hook Assembled View

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IMPORTANT: If a frame liner is installed in the area where a J-hook bracket is to be mounted, use a wide opening J-hook bracket TBB 235162, as shown in **Fig. 13**.

12. Raise the chassis in small increments while aligning the bus body to the frame so the body mounting clips and the rearmost body-to-chassis mounting bolts (shear bolts) can be installed.



Fig. 13, Usage of Wide Opening J-Hook Bracket

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13. Install all the body mounting clips and rear shear bolts, as shown in [Fig. 14](#) and [Fig. 15](#). Tighten the body mounting clip nuts 30 lbf-ft (41 N·m).

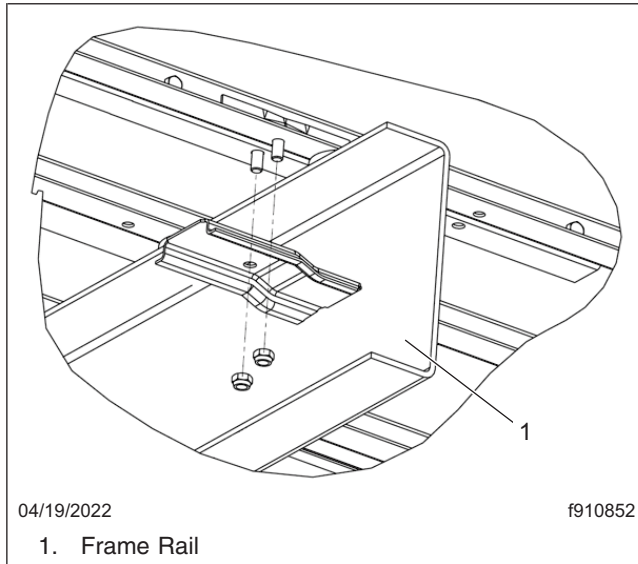


Fig. 14, Typical Body Mounting Clip Installation



Fig. 15, Behind Rear Bumper View

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14. After the body is secured to the chassis, inspect the seat bolt for clearance, as shown in [Fig. 16](#).

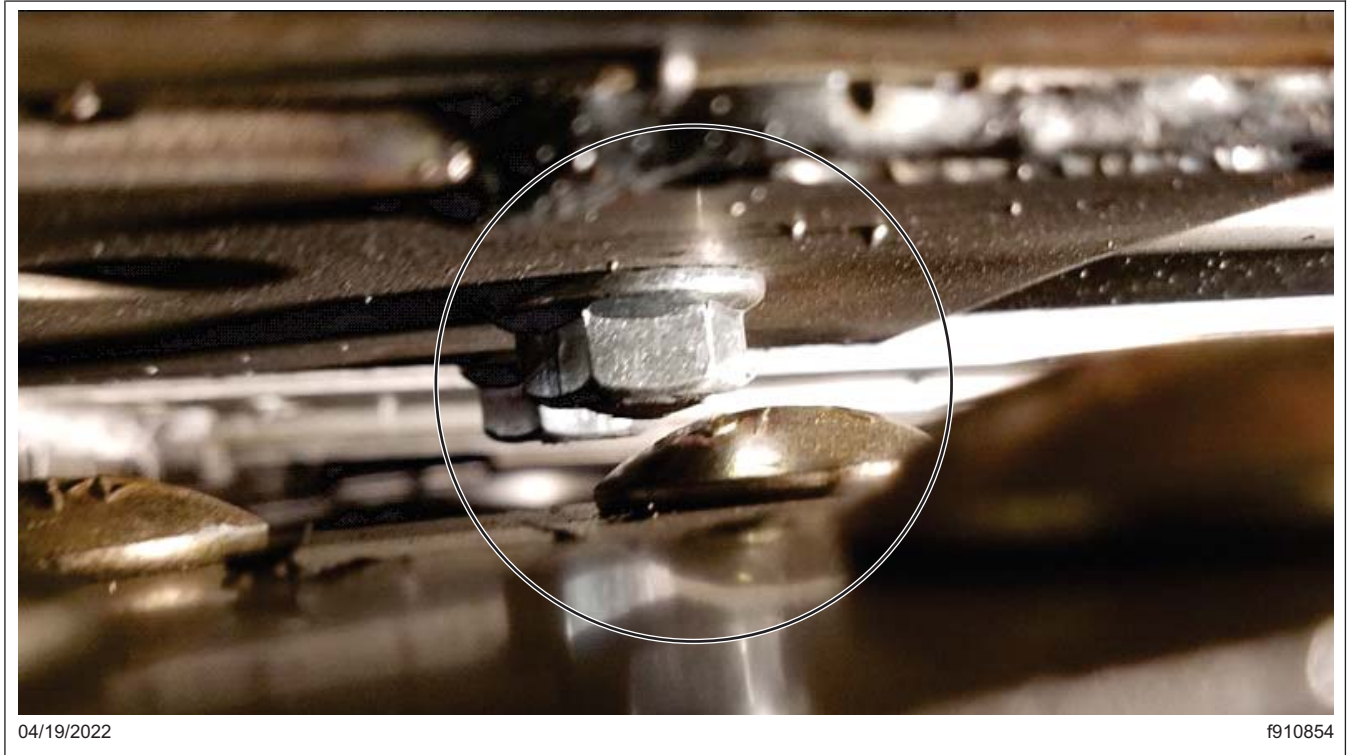


Fig. 16, Clearance Between the Seat Bolt and the Body Secured to the Chassis

15. Remove the jack stands, then lower the vehicle.

16. Install the negative battery cable, then turn the main power disconnect switch to the ON position.