



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education

House Bill 832

Public Utilities – Electric School Bus Pilot Program

Date: February 18, 2021

To: Economic Matters Committee

Position: **SUPPORT**

Contact: Robin Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** HB 832 which establishes an electric school bus pilot program to help the State's shift toward cleaner transportation.

Additional funding and a statewide model will allow more jurisdictions to take initial steps toward an electric school bus transition

A statewide transition to electric school buses would not only represent a shift in Maryland's overall emissions, but it would provide an example of clean energy to Maryland's youth and protect them from weekly direct encounters with toxic bus exhaust. The pilot envisioned in this legislation would allow school systems to take initial steps toward an electric school bus transition.

According to the Maryland Department of Environment, an initial smaller-scale pilot program in Howard County has been a success.¹ The Howard County Public School System describes how a grant from the Maryland Department of the Environment and a partnership with bus contractor MBG Enterprises and BGE allowed the System to purchase two zero emissions vehicle school buses and charging stations to replace two diesel powered vehicles.² This legislation would allow additional counties to enter into similar arrangements for more widespread adoption of electric technology statewide.

Electric vehicles support the Bay's clean-up through reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The burning of fossil fuels in vehicle engines emits nitrogen oxides that contribute to nitrogen pollution of the Chesapeake Bay as the particles dissolve into rainfall. Electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles that use electricity instead of gasoline or diesel help reduce greenhouse gas and nitrogen oxide emissions. Climate change has created an additional challenge for the Bay's clean-up. In 2022 the State must create a plan to address 1.1 million more pounds of nitrogen pollution as a result of greenhouse gas-induced climate change. Increased adoption of electric vehicles will reduce Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions and help address the localized effects of nitrogen pollution into the Bay.

CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 832.

For more information, please contact Robin Jessica Clark, Maryland Staff Attorney at rclark@cbf.org and 443.995.8753.

¹ [Electric School Bus Pilot Program Supports HCPSS Environmental Commitment](#), HCPSS News, June 29, 2020.

² *Id.*

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