



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act (HB 334)

Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman—Favorable with Amendments

Thank you Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and the members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. I come before you today to discuss the Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act (HB 334). The legislation passed the House of Delegates with bipartisan support during the 2020 session. The legislation would transition the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) bus fleet to 100% zero-emission over time. Starting in FY 2023, the bill will prohibit MTA from entering into new contracts to procure buses that are not zero-emission. Under the bill, MTA will be able to make the necessary, but gradual switch over to zero-emission buses without disrupting existing contracts and services.

The Hogan Administration's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act plan includes a goal of 50% MTA electric buses by 2030. The Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act is a more aggressive approach that is necessary to meet Maryland's emissions reduction goals.

MTA has just completed a multi-year procurement of hybrid diesel electric buses and is embarking on a new contract to procure 350 "clean diesel" buses over five years. As of October 2020, MTA's bus fleet consists of 402 hybrid diesel electric buses, and 358 "clean diesel" buses. While the implementation of hybrid electric buses are a promising start, Maryland needs to do more to ensure that zero-emission buses are put on the road.

To ensure that MTA remains on schedule to implement the transition, the bill mandates that starting in 2022, MTA must submit an annual report to the legislature that must include the following:

- An evaluation of the charging infrastructure needed for MTA to maintain an all-zero emission fleet;
- A plan for transitioning any workers adversely effected by the transition from diesel to zero-emission buses to similar roles commensurate with seniority, pay and benefits within MDOT MTA;
- An estimate of the amount of carbon dioxide emissions, measured in pounds, that will be saved due to the use of zero-emission buses each year until the transit bus fleet is converted to zero-emission;
- A financial analysis of the projected cost of implementing and maintaining charging infrastructure; and

- A comparison of the projected cost of the zero-emission bus fleet to the cost of continuing the legacy fleet.

We will also be submitting an amendment to remove the language “to a significant extent” from the bill and to exempt MTA’s mobility paratransit vehicles from the bus purchase requirement.

As I did last year, I would like to clarify any concerns regarding the fiscal note, although it is my understanding that the Maryland Department of Transportation does not oppose the bill. The fiscal note figure is inflated because of the higher up-front costs of zero-emission buses compared to diesel. There is ample evidence, however, that zero-emission buses cost less over the life of the bus because of reduced fuel and maintenance costs. A 2016 analysis from Columbia University on zero-emission electric buses for New York City’s transit service found that the 12-year lifetime cost of an zero-emission electric bus is approximately 12.5 percent lower than the cost of a diesel bus.<sup>1</sup>

At a briefing before your committee during the interim, MTA also raised the issue of the use of MTA buses for emergency evacuations. Although under this bill we would be years away from an all-zero emission fleet, I would be happy to work with this committee and the agency to address that issue.

Vice Chair Stein has an important piece of legislation, the Climate Solutions Act, that contains language similar to the bill before you. I would welcome the committee tabling my bill in favor of Vice Chair Stein’s with the amendments I mentioned above and some other amendments I have shared with the Vice Chair to ensure the existing workforce is properly treated during the transition.

The time to transition to zero- emission transportation has come. I urge the Committee to once again support the Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act to ensure that Maryland becomes a leader in zero-emissions vehicles and to achieve our ambitious emission reduction goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Aber, Judah. “Electric Bus Analysis for New York City Transit.” Electric Bus Analysis for New York City Transit, Columbia University, May 2016