



Bill No. HB-0832
Name: Peter Alexander, PhD
Position: Favorable
RE: Testimony before the Senate Finance Committee
Date: March 30, 2021

Madame Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County MD. I am writing in support of HB-0832, Public Utilities – Electric School Bus Pilot Program, which would establish through the Public Service Commission (PSC) a three-to-five-year program allowing certain electric companies to offer electric buses to interested school districts. This program will complement several other electric vehicle programs currently being considered by the Maryland General Assembly.

Transportation is Maryland’s number one generator of greenhouse gas emissions which are causing global climate change, and tailpipe emissions which contribute to ozone pollution result in failure to meet federal clean air standards for more than 80% of Maryland residents.

Compared to conventional diesel buses, each zero-emission bus, can eliminate almost 1,700 tons of carbon dioxide, ten tons of nitrogen oxides, and 350 pounds of diesel particulate matter over a 12-year period.

Fossil fuel-powered and hybrid electric buses, are significant sources of pollutants other than greenhouse gases. Diesel exhaust contains more than 40 toxic air contaminants that in some cases can lead to decreased lung function and can cause and/or worsen diseases such as asthma and cancer. The concentration of these contaminants inside and surrounding school buses can be higher because of the diesel fuel they use, meaning that school children and bus drivers are almost constantly exposed to these air-borne toxins while waiting for, waiting in, and riding/driving diesel school buses.

Electric buses are more cost-efficient in the long term than diesel buses because of their lower operational and maintenance costs. Electricity that must be generated to charge electric bus batteries increasingly is coming from renewable wind and solar power sources, and the percent of clean, renewable energy generated will continue to increase over time.

We urge a favorable report.

Peter Alexander, PhD
Indivisible Howard County
Columbia, MD