



**HB696 Public Utilities - Electric School Bus Pilot Program**  
**Testimony before**  
**House Economic Matters Committee**  
**February 10, 2022**  
**Position: Favorable**

Mister Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the Committee, my name is Peter Alexander and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. I am writing in support of HB696, The Electric School Bus Pilot Program, which was submitted during the 2021 session as HB832. This bill would establish through the Public Service Commission (PSC) a three-to-five-year program allowing certain investor-owned electric companies to offer electric buses and charging infrastructure to interested school districts. Other provisions (1) require training in the operation of the buses, charging equipment, and related infrastructure, (2) encouraging applicants to seek federal funding through the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act, and (3) encouraging applicants to produce or procure electricity for the program from renewable sources. This program will complement several other electric vehicle programs currently being considered by the Maryland General Assembly. We are grateful for the leadership of Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo for sponsoring this bill.

Transportation is Maryland's number one generator of greenhouse gas emissions which are causing global climate change, and tailpipe emissions which contribute to ozone and particulate (PM2.5) 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 respectfully urge a favorable committee report.**

Peter Alexander, PhD  
Woodbine, MD