

Good afternoon everyone.

Thank you for allowing me to express why the Electric School Bus Pilot Program bill must be enacted within the state of Maryland. Particulate matter levels inside school buses are greater than levels outside the bus due to the engine crankcase and the tailpipe emissions. As a result, children and bus drivers are more exposed to harmful toxins contained within particulate matter. These toxins cause aggravated asthma and childhood cancer. Not only does particulate matter promote a pro-inflammatory environment in the airways of children, but it also is a transport carrier for COVID-19. Recent studies have shown the disproportionate impacts of school buses as 60% of students from low-income families ride these toxic buses to school, compared to 45% of students from families with higher incomes. In contrast, studies have found that electric vehicles improve lung functions in children due to the reduction in diesel tailpipe emissions. Not only have studies shown that electric vehicles lower the health costs that children endure, but they also reduce the financial costs of transportation. Electric vehicles require less expensive and less frequent maintenance than gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles because there are fewer components that need replacement and lubrication, and air filters are not needed. Additionally, while gasoline prices fluctuate, electricity prices remain relatively stable. Not only is the current school bus transportation system a public health and economic problem, but it also factors as an environmental problem. Diesel-fueled transportation accounts for at least 14% of global greenhouse gas emissions, roughly eight billion tons of carbon per year. In contrast, if electric school buses replaced diesel-fueled buses then U.S. carbon emissions would be cut by more than 5 million tons. Overall, the implementation of the Electric School Bus Pilot Program will solve public health, environmental, transportation, and economic issues. Thank you for your time.