



Charles County School Bus Contractors Association (CCSBCA) Testimony in Opposition to SB491 **Charles County Board of Education – School Bus Contractor Employees – Negotiations**

In recognition of School Bus Drivers Appreciation Day, we would like to thank all the women and men who transport our students to and from school safely each day!

- CCSBCA - representing 24 local small school bus companies with generations of experience and the more than 500 bus drivers and attendants in your districts - strongly oppose this bill which calls for “joint employment” with the Charles County Board of Education and allows outside parties to negotiate the terms of our master school bus contract.
- CCSBCA’s 24 small, locally owned companies recruit, train, and fully employ the bus drivers and attendants that transport more than 22,000 children to and from their schools and after school activities everyday safely and efficiently with the budget that is handed down to the 24 companies (mostly minority owned) and their employees from the CC Public School and approved CC BOE. We work with lots of other Charles Co businesses that would be impacted such as: Gragan Glass, Newburg Truck Center, Tommy’s Truck parts, Community Bank of Chesapeake, SMO, Burch Oil, etc.
- CCSBCA negotiates the contract terms each year with the Charles County Public School System for the operations, maintenance, purchase, hours, wages, benefits, etc. for its own employees – bus drivers and attendants. Additionally, each business employs numerous support staff such as mechanics, sub-drivers, porters, administrative, and grounds keeping staff; all of which are funded from our businesses not the Master School Bus Contract that has NO profit line. Each small business then maintains and ensure safe transportation daily for CCPS Students. In other words, ALL costs associated with student transportation.
- Our drivers and the students we transport are not a “figure in the CCPS budget”, we are in the “people business” – employing 500 Charles County workforce and transporting 22,000 children. Our drivers are our greatest resource and our businesses, and the community depend on them; let’s talk from that perspective as we decide on a path forward.
- It would be extremely detrimental to the (mostly minority owned) 24 local companies and its local employees to have the BOE as a joint employer and to have outside parties negotiate the terms to operate and manage our 24 LOCAL family businesses efficiently and safely: **if that’s even legally possible.**
- Last year one of the largest school transportation companies, Keller buses, retired its buses because it became too difficult to operate within the budget and requirements provided by CCPS, especially considering the cost of purchasing a bus, fuel, maintenance, rising healthcare cost, covid costs, and inflation.
- We have tried for 10 years to work in good faith, but CCPS does not seem to care about equity in wages, benefits and hours. This has been an issue for over a decade, and we look for the new leadership, Dr. Maria Navarro, to work with us for the betterment of our school system. For example, CCPS has hired 30 bus drivers inhouse who enjoy the 8-hr day and benefits over our drivers...where is the Equity in Workforce here?
- **CCSBCA implores our state Senators to withdrawal this bill. In lieu of legislation, we propose holding Work Sessions with CCSBCA, a group of bus drivers, and CCPS...not outside parties to bring forth better wages, hours, and benefits for our employees.... this is what we advocate for today.**

Contacts:

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Alpert Bus Service, L.L.C

BJ's Transportation, L.L.C

Buck & Sons Bus Service, L.L.C

Celestine C. Dyson, Inc.

Dyson Bus Service, Inc.

Dyson Trucking, Inc.

Compton Bus Service, Inc.

D&J Buses, Inc.

Dink's Bus Service, Inc.

G&M Transportation, Inc.

G. Wade Compton, Inc.

H&H Bus Service, Inc.

H.O. Sheff & Sons, L.L.C

Nannie's Bus Co., L.L.C

Helen E. Keller

Keller III Bus Service, Inc.

Keller Transportation, Inc.

James H. Stone Jr., L.L.C

P&C Dunnington, Inc.

Ruth E. Koch, Inc.

Koch Trucking, Inc.

Stanley Bus Company, Inc.

Swann Transportation, Inc.