



February 25, 2025

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman and Members
Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: FAVORABLE - SB 779 - Climate Solutions Now Act Affordability Act of 2025

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland School Bus Contractors Association (MSBCA) supports SB 779 - Climate Solutions Now Act Affordability Act of 2025. MSBCA serves as the voice of the private school bus companies that contract with local Maryland school systems in 19 of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions. MSBCA members own and operate over 3,500, or 49% of the school buses transporting school children across the great State of Maryland. MSBCA contracted school buses cover over 53 million miles each year while remaining fully committed to the safety of the students we transport and considers it a privilege to do so.

As you well know, we are facing major challenges transitioning to electric (EV) school buses as mandated by the Climate Solutions Now ACT of 2022. Some of those challenges include performance concerns for long rural routes, battery life and charging in cold weather, an unprepared electric grid infrastructure, the increasing cost of electricity but most importantly the cost of replacing each school bus. To meet the current mandate, it is projected that 500-600 EV school buses will need to be purchased each year. I have enclosed two (2) recent quotes from EV school bus manufacturers confirming the cost of purchasing these buses. A current eco-friendly diesel bus averages \$135,000-145,000. Where an EV school bus ranges from \$360,000-\$388,000. This is more than double.

Maryland school districts that enter into service agreements with MSBCA members do so based on a formula that includes the cost of the vehicle, driver salary, maintenance, fuel, and operating fees. While each school district agreement varies, the cost of converting to new EV school bus is passed on to the individual school districts. In addition, at this time we do not know what the infrastructure costs will be to install the higher tiered electrical needed to reach each bus operator's locations, nor the cost of this electricity.

MSBCA serves as the voice of the private school bus companies that contract with local Maryland school systems in 19 of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions to own and operate the nearly 3500 contracted school buses that transport schoolchildren across the State.

MSBCA asks that you consider the merits of SB 779 related to school buses and our current state budget challenges. On January 22, 2025, Secretary of the Environment, Serena McIlwain noted in her briefing to this committee a need to postpone the EV mandates for transit vehicles to 2032. Even stating "school systems do not have that kind of money". She is correct, we don't.

Again, MSBCA looks forward to working with the legislators to make Maryland the safest and most efficient state in the country for all our children.

Sincerely,

Steve Nelson

Steve Nelson

President

Maryland School Bus Contractors Association

15 School Circle

Annapolis, MD 21401

202-386-3859

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----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Gordon Dhue <gdhue@igburton.com>

To: nelsonbuscompany@verizon.net <nelsonbuscompany@verizon.net>

Cc: Wayne Dhue <wdhue@igburton.com>

Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 at 02:09:03 PM EST

Subject: Bus Pricing 72 Passenger MD buses

Good Afternoon,

The pricing for MD buses that are 72 passengers are as follows:

DIESEL - \$135,553

PROPANE - \$146,023

GAS - \$136,075

EV - \$388,791

These numbers do not include A/C. If you'd like to add A/C to an ICE unit then it will be an additional \$12,000.00. If you add A/C to the EV it'll be \$20,000.

These numbers do not include sales tax, tag, or title fees.

If you have any questions please let me know. My number is 410-443-6058.

Thanks

Gordon Dhue

Bus Sales

i.g. Burton Bus & Truck Center

Mobile: 410-443-6058

gdhue@igburton.com

www.igburtonbuscenter.com



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From: Mike Tine <mtine@american-bus.com>

To: Steve Nelson - Nelson Bus Company (nelsonbuscompany@verizon.net)
<nelsonbuscompany@verizon.net>

Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at 04:27:28 PM EST

Subject: Diesel vs EV Pricing

Good afternoon Steve,

Per our conversation yesterday listed below is the general pricing difference between a 2026 Thomas Saf-T-Liner C2 (diesel vs EV) meeting the general State of Maryland specifications:

- Diesel \$145,000.00 estimated

- EV \$360,000.00 estimated

Please let me know if you need any additional information. Thanks.

Mike



Mike Tine – VP School Bus Sales
(410) 571-1251 Operator (410) 224-8224

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