



**CHARLES COUNTY
SCHOOL BUS
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION**

Good afternoon, my name is Mark Koch, and I serve as the Chair of the Charles County School Bus Contractors. I am here today on behalf of our 24 small businesses, the majority of which are women- and minority-owned, **in Strong Support of HB1359.**

Our organization operates 315 buses, safely transporting over 28,000 students every day. Many of our businesses span two to three generations, with deep pride in supporting the school system by ensuring safe, reliable transportation—allowing educators to focus on student learning, achievement, and equity.

HB1359, supported by our County Commissioners and the Charles County Delegation, is a simple request for fairness and good business practice. It ensures adequate notice before the termination or displacement of a school bus contractor for reasons other than non-performance.

This bill is necessary because:

- Bus contractors make significant financial investment at \$150,000 per bus, purchasing and mortgaging Charles County Specifically spec'd buses with the expectation of reimbursement over several years. Without adequate notice, these investments are at serious risk, threatening our businesses and the livelihoods of more than 400 local bus drivers, attendants, and support staff.
- Furthermore, similar legislation (HB1300/CH0419) was passed in 2017 to protect trash collectors in Charles County under comparable circumstances—this bill seeks to apply the same level of fairness for school bus contractors and remedy the jeopardy of financial ruin of our small businesses.
- Despite repeated requests for advanced notice of their plans, Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) has provided no insight, no plan, and no formal response—and they continue to buy buses and expand their in-house bus fleet. Over the past four years, CCPS has increased their bus fleet from 22 to 69 buses, with more on order. This lack of communication leaves us very uncertain about our future and the future of our employees...bus drivers, attendants and mechanics.

As a Contractor, our businesses are personally liable for millions of dollars in bus loans, insurance, workforce, parts, and other expenses—often personally guaranteed by our homes and our personal assets. If CCPS moves student transportation in-house without fair notice, it would cause irreparable financial harm and disrupt the lives of hundreds of employees and their families who depend on these jobs. Our Commissioners and our Delegation recognize this.

HB1359 does not limit CCPS's authority to make operational decisions. It simply provides adequate notice, which:

1. Allow contractors to plan for the future and protect jobs.
2. Strengthens the partnership between CCPS and the contractors who serve the community.

3. Ensures the continued safe and efficient transportation of students without sudden disruptions.

We remain committed to working with CCPS and the County to serve our students and believe this legislation is a reasonable step toward ensuring fairness, transparency, and security for all parties involved.

In Closing we thank our county and state legislators for your support and respectfully request a favorable report on HB1359 to protect our businesses, our hundreds of employees, and the families we serve. Thank you for your time & consideration.

On behalf of:

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. Duffy Company

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.

Mark Koch

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