



# Maryland

## Energy Administration

**TO:** Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee

**FROM:** MEA

**SUBJECT:** HB 1019 - School Bus Transition - Propane-Powered School Buses - Grant Program, Fund, and Purchase

**DATE:** February 26, 2026

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**MEA Position: UNFAVORABLE**

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) respectfully submits this letter in opposition to House Bill 1019.

Maryland has established a clear and deliberate policy framework to transition the State's school bus fleet to zero-emission vehicles. This policy reflects our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality for students, and leveraging long-term operational savings through electrification. HB 1019 alters this framework by expanding the Zero-Emission Vehicle School Bus Transition Grant Program and Fund to include propane-powered school buses.

While propane school buses may offer incremental emission reductions compared to diesel, they remain combustion vehicles that emit greenhouse gases and criteria pollutants. Expanding eligibility within a program specifically designed to accelerate zero-emission deployment dilutes the State's long-term strategy and redirects limited funding away from fully zero-emission solutions.

The Zero-Emission Vehicle School Bus Transition Program was intentionally structured to support planning, infrastructure development, vehicle-to-grid capabilities, and the deployment of electric school buses. These investments align with Maryland's broader climate goals, grid modernization efforts, and public health priorities. Propane vehicles do not provide comparable emissions reductions, do not support vehicle-to-grid integration, and would not advance the State's long-term electrification objectives.

Additionally, the bill authorizes county boards of education, beginning in fiscal year 2030, to enter into new contracts for the purchase of propane-powered buses. This change would introduce policy uncertainty and could slow market transformation toward zero-emission technologies at a time when federal funding and private investment are increasingly focused on electrification.

Maryland's transition to zero-emission school buses represents both an environmental and public health investment. School buses operate in close proximity to children, and electrification reduces tailpipe emissions that contribute to asthma and other respiratory conditions. Maintaining a clear,

consistent policy signal toward zero-emission vehicles ensures that State resources remain targeted toward technologies that deliver the greatest long-term environmental and health benefits.

For these reasons, MEA respectfully urges the Committee to issue an **unfavorable report** on House Bill 1019.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Megan Outten, Policy manager, at [megan.outten@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.outten@maryland.gov) or 443.842.1780.