



**CHARLES COUNTY
SCHOOL BUS
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION**

Date: March 12, 2026

To: The Honorable Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair; The Honorable Jessica Feldmark, Vice Chair

From: Charles County School Bus Contractors Association (CCSBCA) President Mark Koch

Cc: Members, House Ways and Means Committee

Re: **Favorable HB1493-** Charles County – Student Bus Transportation Providers – Provider Displacement

The Charles County School Bus Contractors Association (CCSBCA) comprises 24 small businesses, predominantly women and minority-owned, which own and operate 300 buses serving over 28,000 students and their families. Our businesses have ownership that spans two and three generations – we take immense pride in transporting school age students safely and efficiently every day so that the school system can focus on what they do best - learning and student achievement.

HB1493 specifically addresses “notice of displacement” to Charles County Bus Contractors **and to the public**, promoting transparency and accountability for all stakeholders. This bill will ensure “prior notification— of at least 6 years—before termination that results in the displacement of a Contractor(s)”. The bill includes provisions for non-performance, so that is not an issue.

It is important to clarify that this bill does not restrict the authority of the Charles County Public School system or the Board of Education to determine and implement changes regarding whether transportation services are insourced or outsourced in the future, they retain that authority without any constraints. It would protect 24 small businesses, including mine, from experiencing personal financial disaster and 400 employees from being displaced without notice.

The primary requirement of this bill is to ensure that any such changes are communicated in advance to us through public notification. This measure would provide timely information to contractors, county government, the state, and families, so that all affected parties are aware of impending changes to student transportation services.

The requested 6-year notification period is consistent with practices in neighboring counties that also utilize school bus contractors and aligns with the typical terms of contractors’ bank loans, 6-year personal bank loans for every bus purchased. Buses are purchased on an annual rolling procurement cycle.

Advance notice, as required by the proposed legislation, is necessary to allow contractors time to plan for the future and to safeguard the security of their employees. This includes more than 400 local bus drivers, attendants, and support personnel whose livelihoods depend on stable and predictable transportation contracts.

This is not a contractual issue, it is notice and an assurance of accountability and transparency so that we cannot be put out of business overnight like a neighboring county experienced. With investments in the hundreds of millions of dollars – 300 buses at \$160,000 per bus not including the facilities infrastructure (lots), the operating costs, vendor contracts, and employee responsibilities, it is within the best interest of all parties involved to require CCPS and BOE to provide public notice to us, our employees, funders, taxpayers, and especially the families.

The proposed legislation is crucial for ensuring stability and long-term planning not only for the School Bus Contractors but also for the County's school system, providing mutual benefits and a stronger foundation for collaboration.

Charles County School Bus Contractors remain committed to working together, and we believe this legislation would enhance that partnership by bringing accountability, transparency, and security to all parties involved. **We urge your support for HB1493.**

Thank you,
Mark Koch
CCSBCA-President