



March 8th, 2024

OPPOSITION: HB1360 - School Bus Transition – Propane–Powered School Buses – Grant Program, Fund, and Purchase

The World Resources Institute’s Electric School Bus Initiative is grateful for this opportunity to submit testimony regarding House Bill 1360, which concerns propane-powered school buses. **We oppose HB1360 - School Bus Transition – Propane–Powered School Buses – Grant Program, Fund, and Purchase.**

The World Resources Institute (WRI) is a global research organization that works with governments, businesses, multilateral institutions and civil society groups to develop practical solutions that improve people’s lives and protect nature. Within WRI, the Electric School Bus Initiative collaborates with partners and communities to build momentum for school bus electrification, bringing health, climate and economic benefits to children and families across the country.

We strongly urge you to oppose House Bill 1360, which would make state and other funding available for the procurement of propane-powered school buses and amend school bus purchase and use requirements to promote a shift toward propane-powered school buses. Investments in propane school buses, such as those proposed in House Bill 1360, would negatively impact air quality, the health of our children, and our climate, while putting the school transportation system at odds with Maryland’s commitment and requirements under the Advanced Clean Trucks Rule – and the state’s broader leadership on climate and public health.

Children, who are particularly susceptible to the negative impacts of air pollution, deserve a clean ride to school every day. Propane is a fossil fuel and produces harmful pollution when burned. According to data from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Argonne National Laboratory [AFLEET tool](#), propane-burning school buses emit dangerous pollution at levels generally comparable to or higher than current diesel models. In contrast, electric school buses are the only school bus type that does not require burning a fossil fuel aboard the vehicle. Electric school buses have no tailpipes – and, therefore, no harmful tailpipe emissions.

Moreover, Maryland’s commitment to environmental justice and equity would be undermined by House Bill 1360. Since [Black students](#), [low-income students](#), and those with disabilities are more likely to ride the bus to school than their peers, reducing tailpipe emissions from school buses is vital to a more equitable future.

Propane-burning school buses also emit high levels of greenhouse gases – in fact, slightly higher levels of greenhouse gases than diesel-burning school buses. In contrast, electric school buses result in [half the greenhouse gas emissions](#) of propane-burning and diesel-burning school buses, even after factoring in the upstream emissions associated with electricity generation. Moreover, as Maryland continues to invest in renewable electricity generation, the electrons powering electric school buses will only get cleaner over time. The same cannot be said for propane school buses.

Finally, as a fossil fuel, propane is incompatible with the zero emissions targets Maryland has adopted. We applaud Maryland's decision to adopt the Advanced Clean Trucks rule, which requires manufacturers to sell zero emissions trucks and buses – including school buses – as a growing percentage of their fleet over time. Increasing investments in propane school buses will hamper the state's ability to meet its commitment.

Zero emissions school buses, such as electric school buses, are the best at lowering the emissions that affect student health and the environment and should remain the sole focus of Maryland's School Bus Transition Fund and School Bus Transition Grant Program.

Thank you for your consideration, and we are happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Hayman

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World Resources Institute