



March 4, 2025

The Honorable David Alvarez
Chair, Budget Subcommittee No. 3 on Education Finance
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 5320
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Strong Opposition to Cuts to Zero-Emission School Buses

Chair Alvarez,

We write to you as environmental, health, and community advocates. We are collectively and individually committed to expanding adoption of zero-emission electric school buses, with robust workforce standards, so that our communities can breathe clean air and enjoy family-sustaining, high-wage careers.

We wish to express our strong opposition to the Governor's proposal to cut \$500 million in funding for zero-emissions school buses in the FY 25-26 budget. This funding is critical to ensuring smooth implementation of AB 579 (Ting, Chapter 445, Statutes of 2023), which requires new school buses to be zero-emission beginning January 1, 2035.

The proposed cuts would have a profoundly negative impact on local school districts' ability to follow through on their commitments to the health of their students, drivers, and local communities, particularly in light of the uncertainty around \$2.2 billion in federal school bus funding.

As of 2023, 62% of the publicly owned school buses in California were still fueled by diesel, with about half of these being from 2007 or earlier. Pollutants from mobile sources are particularly harmful to children—leading to reduced lung development and increasing risk of lung cancer, asthma symptoms, bronchitis, and pneumonia. Exposure to emissions has also been linked to poor academic performance. Zero-emission technologies are here, and our children deserve every effort to provide these school buses.

Now, more than ever, it is imperative that California remains committed to fully funding the essential transition to zero-emission school buses in order to protect the health of children and communities. We appreciate your consideration and support of this important program.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ada Waelder (Earthjustice) at awaelder@earthjustice.org.

Sincerely,

Yasmine Agelidis
Earthjustice

Cecilia Estolano
Better World Group

Gracyna Mohabir
California Environmental Voters

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Christina Scaringe
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FACTS Families Advocating for Chemical
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National Electrical Contractors
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