



March 22, 2023

Minnesota House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy  
200 Minnesota State Office Building  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Chair Acomb, and House Climate and Energy Finance and Policy Members:

The Coalition for Clean Transportation (CCT) appreciates the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of HF 2502 and strongly supports the authorization of public utilities to file programs with the public utilities commission to promote the deployment of electric school buses.

Monday through Friday, Minnesota's K-12 students are exposed to harmful diesel emissions as they travel to and from school. This year, the Minnesota legislature has the power to promote electric school buses that generate health and climate benefits by passing HF2502. Electric buses emit zero tailpipe emissions, which can significantly reduce air pollution and improve air quality around schools and in surrounding communities. Deployment of electric school buses not only mitigates the effects of climate change, it also reduces the risks and health impacts related to air pollution, improving the quality of life for our children— one of the most vulnerable constituencies in Minnesota. Exposure to diesel emissions can be especially harmful for children with asthma.<sup>1</sup> Electric school buses eliminate a major source of exposure to harmful diesel exhaust fumes, which can cause respiratory problems and aggravate asthma and other respiratory conditions,<sup>2</sup> improving the health of students, drivers, and community members. In addition to improving respiratory health, studies have demonstrated that switching from diesel to electric school buses can improve students' academic performances<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Beatty TK, Shimshack JP. *School buses, diesel emissions, and respiratory health*. J Health Econ. 2011 Sep;30(5):987-99. doi: 10.1016/j.jhealeco.2011.05.017. Epub 2011 Jun 21. PMID: 21741102.

<sup>2</sup> Beatty TK, Shimshack JP. *School buses, diesel emissions, and respiratory health*. J Health Econ. 2011 Sep;30(5):987-99. doi: 10.1016/j.jhealeco.2011.05.017. Epub 2011 Jun 21. PMID: 21741102.

<sup>3</sup> Austin, W., Heutel, G. and Kreisman, D. (2022) *Fixing school buses is an effective (and cheap) way to improve students' health and academic performance*, Brookings. Brookings. Available at: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2019/04/21/fixing-school-buses-is-an-effective-and-cheap-way-to-improve-students-health-and-academic-performance/> (Accessed: March 15, 2023).

In 2017, Minnesota set a milestone by becoming the first Midwest state to introduce an electric school bus in Lakeville, where students benefit from riding on a clean electric bus. However, the state has not kept up with this progress since then. Despite operating over 13,000 school buses, only 13 of them are currently electric. Furthermore, Minnesota received the lowest number of electric school buses (4) among all the states in the region in the initial phase of the EPA's Electric School Bus program.

School districts alone are already stretched thin and don't have the capacity or resources to apply for or purchase electric school buses on their own. This legislation will support school districts in accelerating the adoption of electric school buses into district fleets and on Minnesota roads creating cleaner trips to school for our kids and cleaner air across Minnesota.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our support for the passage of HF2502.

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CCT organizes and advocates to eliminate Minnesota's transportation-related climate emissions through the increased adoption and availability of sustainable and equitable electrification options, centering BIPOC and under-resourced communities who disproportionately bear the impact of climate change, air pollution, and experience high rates of mobility injustice. CCT envisions a future where all Minnesotans, from urban to suburban to rural, have equitable access to clean transportation options that promote health and connection for all.

