



P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

August 8, 2023

Administrator Adam Ortiz

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3
4 Penn Center
1600 John F. Kennedy Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029

RE: Region 3- Montgomery County Public School Application - EPA 2023 Clean School Bus (CSB) Grant Program

Dear Administrator Ortiz,

We are writing to express our support for the above-referenced grant application to provide funding through the Clean School Bus Program to help Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland (MCPS) purchase and maintain 50 electric school buses. The project builds upon the largest electric school bus deployment in North America, which will have over 200 zero-emission buses (ZEBs) in operation across five depots by the end of 2023. This project will help MCPS take the next step toward its goal of achieving an entirely electric fleet within 10 years, serving as a national model for electrification at scale, and improving environmental quality and public health in the region.

The Maryland Sierra Club believes that everyone deserves access to a transportation system that protects our climate, keeps us healthy, and connects us to the places where we live, work, and play. Electric school buses will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants that are hazardous to human health. Medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, including school buses, are the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector in Maryland, and account for 48 percent of PM 2.5 pollution and 39 percent of nitrogen oxide (NOx) pollution from all on-road vehicles in the state. On high smog days, pollution from cars and trucks alone can bring smog levels in Maryland to 15.9 percent of their allowable healthy limits, leaving total smog more likely to exceed safe levels.

The project, a partnership between Highland Electric Fleets and MCPS, would further the District's commitment to delivering clean air for students, school district staff, and the MCPS community at large, while helping meet the District's and Maryland's broader carbon-reduction goals.

We believe that continuing to invest in electric school buses for MCPS students is a significant step toward a cleaner and more sustainable community for Montgomery County and Maryland as a whole. Thank you for considering the Maryland Sierra Club's perspective on this matter. Should you require any additional information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Mendelson
Clean Transportation Representative
Maryland Sierra Club

Shilpa Shenvi
Transit, Bike, and Pedestrian Lead
Maryland Sierra Club

Jane Lyons-Raeder
Transportation Co-Chair
Maryland Sierra Club