April 27, 2022

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Joyce  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Merkley and Pingree and Ranking Members Murkowski and Joyce:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we write to request at least $300 million in new funding be provided for zero-emission school buses under the Clean School Bus Program. We also ask that you include the report language below to enhance the successful deployment of zero-emission buses and robust charging infrastructure for school districts in underserved and rural communities.

The Clean School Bus Program was established as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; P.L. 117-58). This bipartisan law included a down payment to start electrifying our nation’s massive school bus fleet of roughly 480,000 vehicles and provide healthier, cleaner futures for students. However, the $2.5 billion dedicated solely to zero-emission buses, along with the additional $2.5 billion dedicated to zero-emission and alternative fuel buses, only scratches the surface of what is needed to transition to zero-emission buses and improve the health of the more than 20 million students who ride buses to school each day as well as surrounding communities.

To deliver the benefits of electric school buses and meet the growing demand for school bus electrification, the “Clean Commute for Kids Act” (H.R. 2721; S. 1271) calls for a ten-year, $25 billion investment. The additional annual appropriation of at least $300 million for FY 2023 would help bolster the Clean School Bus Program, provide an opportunity for annual engagement beyond the five years of funding provided in the IIJA, support a healthier and more productive learning environment for our nation’s children, and bring the United States closer to meeting its emissions targets.

We believe it is also imperative that the Subcommittee support efforts to increase access to zero-emission buses and charging infrastructure for school districts in historically underserved and rural communities. Therefore, we ask that you include report language to encourage the
necessary outreach, collaboration, and coordination among school districts and the relevant federal agencies:

The Committee provides not less than $300,000,000 to the Clean School Bus Program for zero-emission school bus deployment and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Committee directs the Agency to conduct outreach to inform, encourage, and support potential award recipients in historically disadvantaged, underserved, and rural communities regarding the availability of resources for the replacement of existing school buses with zero-emission school buses. The Agency shall collaborate with the Department of Energy and Department of Transportation to ensure funding resources for the transition to zero-emission school buses, as well as the necessary charging infrastructure, vehicle-to-grid opportunities, and workforce training programs, are deployed in parallel to optimize program outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests to ensure the Clean School Bus Program is better equipped to improve the health and safety of students, reduce harmful emissions in communities, and meet the needs of our school districts, especially those in historically underserved and rural communities.

Sincerely,

Alex Padilla  
United States Senator

Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress

Raphael G. Warnock  
United States Senator

Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Katie Porter
Member of Congress

John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Kathy Manning
Member of Congress

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Sean Casten
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Adam Smith
Member of Congress
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
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Michael F. Q. San Nicolas
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Raúl M. Grijalva
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Nikema Williams
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Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
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Lori Trahan
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Ruben Gallego
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Doris Matsui
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Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress
Cori Bush
Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress

Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress

Mike Levin
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress
Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress