

Submitter: Ken Jones
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2945

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Gorsek and Representative McLain, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Thank you for holding the hearing on this important bill, HB 2945, that establishes the Zero Emission School Bus Assistance Fund for Oregon and policies and guideline for the use of this Fund. Despite the federal government withholding money already allocated last year for purchasing zero-emission vehicles for school districts, many states and school districts have already set up their own funds. One district, the Oakland Unified School District in California, is already only using zero-emission school buses and doing so in such a way that when they are charging after school that the process is bi-directional such that energy in their batteries can help supply energy to the grid when it is most needed in the high demand evening hours. But the the most immediate benefit of having more zero-emission buses is to eliminate the overwhelming pollution that our children breathe when they must ride diesel fueled buses. The health benefits for both the children and the communities, often in living in "disproportionally impacted communities" is especially important in helping decrease the huge healthcare costs to society caused by the air pollution.

I so much appreciate that the focus of this bill is to more quickly get to a higher proportion of zero-emission school buses in these disproportionately impacted communities than possibly other communities in the state. While I do wish that we could get to the goals for those communities even quicker than stated in the bill, and, indeed for all districts in the state, I think, given the the current Republican administration's focus on being anti-science and anti-environment, and promoting health insecurity at the federal level, the goals set in the bill are reasonable.

Some have expressed worry about cost. Electric vehicles, while a little more in cost up front, have tremendous cost savings from minimal upkeep compared to fossil fuel powered vehicles. They are much more fuel efficient given what you pay to charge them for mile traveled vs. what a fossil fuel powered vehicle costs per mile driven. The energy on Oregon's electric grid is nearly 90% renewable, I believe, so is much less polluting and much more helpful in moving the state towards reaching its climate goals. And then there is what you won't be spending on healthcare as a state that should be added in to any cost-benefit analysis.

The more we can do to clean our air the better for everyone. I encourage all legislators to stand tall for the our state's efforts to fight for rational policies that implement what is needed to secure the peace, health, and security of all

Oregonians. I live in this state because most all legislators are doing their job towards that end.

I ask you for a do pass vote on this bill.

Thank you,

Ken Jones