



4145 NE Cully Blvd., Portland, OR, 97630 | 503-290-8570

April 15th, 2025

To: Joint Transportation Committee

Re: Support HB 2945

Co-Chairs Gorsek, McLain, and Members of the committee. My name is Xitalli Torres, and I am the Air Quality and Climate Coordinator at Verde. We are committed to building Environmental Wealth in our communities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2945, a bill that would support Oregon schools in the transition to zero-emission school buses with clear direction and financial and technical assistance.

We need a 2025 transportation package to deliver cleaner air, healthier communities, and job creation in our clean vehicle economy. HB 2945 is a clear and needed component of this goal. This is nestled in with the MHD ZEV programs and charging infrastructure programs, which have significant air quality benefits and **make our electrification policies work**. In addition to supporting HB 2945, please also prioritize \$30 million per year into the MHD ZEV rebate program and \$10 million a year for charging infrastructure to ensure school districts and other public fleets can plan with certainty.

[Data](#) shows that frontline communities, low-income, black, brown, and Indigenous communities, are disproportionately impacted by transportation air pollution in Oregon. Furthermore, children are among the most vulnerable to complications that can be caused by air pollution, so updating the vehicles that they use most is a logical priority. Many school buses today run on diesel, which is known to be a major contributor to health complications such as asthma, bronchitis, heart disease, developmental issues, and more. Our students need a safer alternative now, and it is available through zero-emission school buses.

Electric school buses will save school districts money over time. Electric buses cost significantly less to fuel and maintain than diesel buses, meaning taxpayer savings along with improved air quality. These savings would be compounded with state investments in technical assistance and planning capacity for school districts transitioning to electric buses. These improvements will also drive clean energy jobs and community resilience - the long-term benefits are undeniable.

Please vote yes on HB 2945 -1, because our kids deserve the best care for their health, safety, and education. Zero-emission transportation investments are critical to the transportation package and to our shared vision of a just and healthy future.

Xitlali Torres
Air Quality and Climate Coordinator
Verde



4145 NE Cully Blvd., Portland, OR, 97630 | 503-290-8570