

Submitter: Brian Ettling
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2945

Co-Chairs McLain, Gorsek, and members of the Transportation Committee:
My name is Brian Ettling. My wife and I live in outer NE Portland. I grew up in St. Louis, Missouri where I have fond memories taking the bus everyday to school in grade school and high school. I lived close enough to my Junior High that I walked home every day. As you know, school buses are vital for our children's education to transport them to school, field trips, and team sporting events.

Many kids have positive impressions of their school buses. You have probably heard the song sung by many children:

"The wheels on the bus go round and round
Round and round
Round and round
The wheels on the bus go round and round
All 'round the town"

Every day, more than 300,000 Oregon children ride school buses. Many of those buses run on diesel — a known carcinogen and a major contributor to asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory issues. Children are especially vulnerable to the impacts of diesel exhaust. Zero-emission school buses offer a safer alternative, protecting kid's health from diesel exhaust.

The exciting thing is this shift to electric buses will save school districts money. Over a bus's lifetime, electric buses cost significantly less to fuel and maintain than diesel buses—yielding taxpayer savings while also improving air quality for students. These savings are amplified when the state invests in technical assistance and planning capacity for school districts transitioning to electric fleets.

Many children are learning about climate change at school and from conversations with their families. Transportation remains Oregon's largest source of climate pollution, responsible for 35% of our total greenhouse gas emissions. Electrifying our school bus fleets is a critical step in decarbonizing this sector and aligning with Oregon's climate goals. Oregon has taken bold action in the past to cut pollution from cars and trucks — from adopting the Advanced Clean Trucks Rule to supporting investments through the Climate Protection Program. HB 2945 is a forward-thinking solution that aligns with our climate commitments, keeps momentum going, and builds on our progress to date.

The good news is electrifying school buses doesn't just reduce emissions — it also

grows Oregon's clean energy economy. Investing in zero-emission vehicles supports good-paying jobs in vehicle manufacturing, charging infrastructure deployment, utility planning, and long-term maintenance . It also helps build smarter, more resilient energy systems. Planning for charging infrastructure encourages local energy innovation and enhances grid flexibility — especially when paired with smart charging and vehicle-to-grid capabilities.

If you pass this bill, you might Oregon school children someday singing this song:

"The electric school buses get charged at night.
Charged at night. Charged at night.
The electric school buses get charged at night.
All while we are sleeping."

Thank you for taking my testimony into your consideration.

Sincerely,
Brian Ettling