

Submitter: Craig Beaver
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2945

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee,

My name is Craig Beaver, and I serve as the Administrator for Transportation at the Beaverton School District.

As the administrator of the 7th largest electric school bus fleet in the nation, currently comprising 45 buses and soon to be the 3rd largest with 100 electric buses and charging stations, I am writing to express our strong support for HB 2945-1 in its amended form.

We believe that the removal of implementation dates is crucial for the successful electrification of school buses in Oregon. The initial \$20 million investment in the Zero-Emission School Bus Assistance Fund is an essential first step, and we advocate for annual deposits to this fund in subsequent years. We are excited about the prospect of Oregon introducing an Electric Bus Replacement Grant program, especially in light of the freezes and potential cancellation of federal funding.

To maximize the impact of grant funding and further increase electrification efforts across more districts, we propose the following modifications:

- Incremental Cost Coverage: The grant should cover the incremental cost of purchasing an electric bus over a diesel bus.
- Disposal of Replaced Buses: The grant should require that replaced diesel buses be rendered unusable, following the same method currently in place by the DEQ for grant programs.
- Propane-Powered Bus Replacement: Introduce a smaller maximum grant award for replacing diesel buses with propane-powered buses. While not zero-emission, propane buses reduce harmful particulate matter pollution by over 98% and greenhouse gas emissions by almost 20% compared to diesel buses.
- Infrastructure Planning and Installation: The grant should cover a portion of infrastructure planning and installation costs. Many utilities have Make-Ready programs that share the cost of installing infrastructure (transformers, switch gear, etc.) with districts. Offsetting some of the district's portion would be beneficial.

In conclusion, we strongly support HB 2945-1 and advocate for its passage.