

October 26, 2021

Dear Senators/Representatives:

As physicians, nurses, public health professionals and health care workers dedicated to providing children with a healthy future, we urge you to support at least \$20 billion for zero-emission school buses as part of federal infrastructure investments.

Nationally, more than 480,000 school buses are on the road, carrying millions of children every day. Currently 95 percent of these buses are diesel-powered. There is clear scientific evidence demonstrating the effects of diesel exhaust exposure on the human body, including asthma attacks, premature deaths, and cancer. Children are especially vulnerable to poor air quality, as their brains and respiratory systems are still developing. Children also have higher respiration frequency, multiplying the volume of pollutants they inhale. Diesel exhaust exposure is linked to serious health effects in children, including asthma attacks and diminished brain function.

One-third of American children take the bus to school. Kids from low-income communities are more likely to depend on school buses, and thus bear more of the burden of pollution from diesel buses. Black and Hispanic communities are exposed to disproportionately high levels of particle pollution and its resulting health effects. People of color already face more health disparities and less access to quality healthcare. We urge you to do everything you can to eliminate this unnecessary burden on children's health.

Because initial costs are high, many districts continue to use polluting, unhealthy diesel buses. A federal investment of \$20 billion can electrify one-fifth of all diesel-powered school buses and help create additional momentum for zero-emission vehicles nationally.

We support this important measure to create a safer, healthier environment for all children. Replacing diesel-powered buses will significantly improve air quality for students, reducing their exposure to toxic and cancer-causing pollutants like nitrogen oxides and particle pollution. An investment in electric school buses is an investment in the health of our young patients. Children shouldn't have to breathe harmful diesel exhaust on their way to school.

Sincerely,

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