



**Statement of Adriana Espinoza  
New York City Program Director  
New York League of Conservation Voters  
Committee on Environmental Protection  
Int 0455-2018  
December 17, 2018**

Good morning. My name is Adriana Espinoza, Director of the New York City Program at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient. I would like to thank Chair Constantinides for the opportunity to testify before the Committee on Environmental Protection.

It is no longer acceptable or sustainable for the Department of Education to allow bus companies to pollute our air with their fleets of diesel buses. A transition to cleaner fuel technologies is necessary for the health and safety of our most vulnerable populations. In addition to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, diesel school buses emit harmful particulate matter into the air and the cabin of the buses that damage the respiratory systems of children. According to the American Lung Association, particle pollutant exposure has been linked to the development of asthma in children; increased hospitalization for asthma attacks for children; slowed lung function in children and teenagers; damage to the airways of the lungs; increased risk of death from cardiovascular disease; and increased risk of lower birth weight and infant mortality.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, there were 10,350 buses transporting 147,160 students daily, the majority of whom are students with disabilities. Additionally, the majority of school buses depots are located in environmental justice communities, where lower-income communities and communities of color face higher rates of air pollution and bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change.

NYLCV estimates that there would be a reduction of roughly 18 million pounds of NO<sub>x</sub>, 74,000 pounds of PM 2.5 and 2.9 million short tons of greenhouse gases over 16 years (the average lifetime of a school bus) if we replaced NYC's diesel school buses with all-electric models. That would be the equivalent of removing 620,985 passenger vehicles from the road.<sup>2</sup>

For these reasons, NYLCV supports **Int 0455-2018** by Council Member Dromm to speed up the transition to cleaner, safer school buses.

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from: <http://www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/state-of-the-air/sota-2018-full.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Calculated using the Argonne Heavy-Duty Vehicle Emissions Calculator:  
<https://afleet-web.es.anl.gov/hdv-emissions-calculator/>



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However, we respectfully recommend the following changes:

1. Extend the period of alternative-fuel and hybrid vehicles from 10 years of use to 12 years before requiring a full transition to all-electric school buses. These buses are already cleaner than diesel buses and have an estimated useful life of up to 16 years, so we should not overburden small businesses who were early adopters of clean technology.
2. Require the use of “zero-emission school buses” after 2040, not “all-electric zero-emission school buses,” as we don’t want to limit ourselves to one technology in a rapidly changing market. All-electric models are the only viable ZEV solution today, but we don’t know if that will be the case in 2040.
3. Consider the possibility of a waiver for small school bus companies that may face undue financial hardship. This waiver should have strict guidelines, require an early application, and demonstrate that a full transition to ZEV is not possible in the required time frame.

The inclusion of the above items allows for a better transition to electric and other zero-emission vehicles for small business owners while also ensuring that the city can take the necessary steps to protect our environment and public health.

NYLCV is proud to have worked with the City Council over the years on policies that improve air quality and public health, and I urge the Committee on Environmental Protection to consider the aforementioned recommendations. Thank you for your time.

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