

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Merkley and Simpson and Ranking Members Murkowski and Pingree:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we write to request at least \$300 million in new funding be provided for zero-emission school buses under the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean School Bus Program. We also seek the report language included below to enhance the successful deployment of zero-emission buses and robust charging infrastructure for school districts in underserved and rural communities.

The Clean School Bus Program was established as part of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA; P.L. 117-58). This bipartisan law included a down payment to start electrifying our nation's massive school bus fleet of roughly 480,000 vehicles to provide healthier, cleaner futures for students. The \$2.5 billion dedicated solely to zero-emission buses, along with the additional \$2.5 billion dedicated to zero-emission and alternative fuel buses, only scratches the surface of what is needed to transition to zero-emission buses and improve the health of the more than 20 million students who ride buses to school each day.

Since the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched the Clean School Bus Program in 2022, demand for electric school buses has exceeded expectations and demonstrated need for greater investment. Every funding opportunity to date has been oversubscribed, as schools demonstrate their commitment to their students. For instance, the \$400 million initially made available for the first round of grant awards fell short of the immense demand. The EPA responded by increasing the total funding available in this first round of grant awards from \$400 million to nearly \$1 billion to support the purchase of over 2,700 clean school buses in 280 school districts serving over 7 million students across 37 states. The continued, resounding demand for the Clean School Bus Program illustrates the need for additional appropriations to support schools as they electrify their school bus fleets.

The modest additional annual appropriation of at least \$300 million for FY 2025 would bring us closer to the ten-year, \$25 billion investment that would have been authorized in the “Clean Commute for Kids Act” (H.R. 2721; S. 1271), which was introduced in the 117th Congress. Investments made through the IIJA are already delivering key benefits to school bus electrification efforts. However, additional funding is necessary to meet the growing demand for school bus electrification, provide an opportunity for annual engagement beyond the five years of funding provided in the IIJA, support for a healthier environment for our nation’s children, and bring the United States closer to meeting its emissions targets.

In addition to supporting these investments, we believe it is imperative that the Subcommittee support efforts to increase access to zero-emission buses, charging infrastructure, and robust technical assistance for school districts in historically underserved and rural communities. Therefore, we ask that you include report language to encourage the necessary collaboration and coordination among school districts, utilities, and the relevant federal agencies:

The Committee provides not less than \$300,000,000 to the Clean School Bus Program for zero-emission school bus deployment and related electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Committee directs the Agency to conduct outreach to inform, encourage, and support potential award recipients in historically disadvantaged, underserved, and rural communities regarding the availability of resources for the replacement of existing school buses with zero-emission school buses. The Agency shall collaborate with the Joint Office on Energy and Transportation, Department of Energy, and Department of Transportation to ensure funding and technical assistance resources for the transition to zero-emission school buses are deployed alongside resources for workforce development, charging infrastructure planning, and vehicle to grid opportunities to optimize program outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests to ensure the Clean School Bus Program is equipped to improve the health and safety of students, reduce harmful emissions in communities, and meet the needs of our school districts, especially those in historically underserved and rural communities.

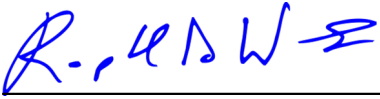
Sincerely,



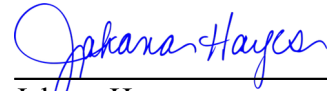
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



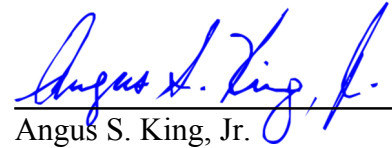
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



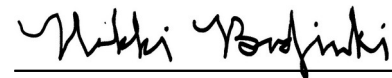
John Hickenlooper
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Laphonza Butler
United States Senator



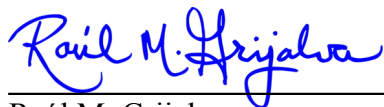
Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



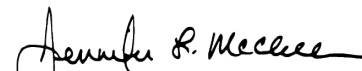
Gregorio Kilili Camacho
Sablan
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



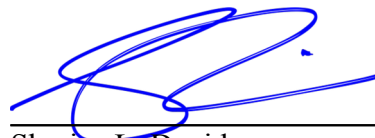
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



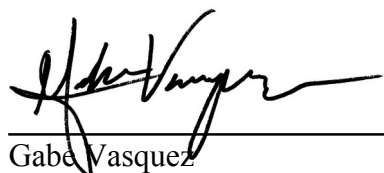
Jennifer L. McClellan
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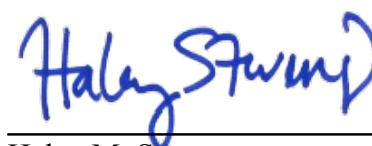
Nikema Williams
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Haley M. Stevens
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Veronica Escobar
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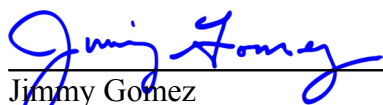
Martin Heinrich
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Rashida Tlaib
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Jimmy Gomez
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Julia Brownley
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Andy Kim
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Summer Lee
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Lucy McBath
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Bill Foster
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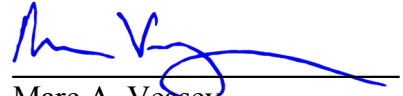
Chris Deluzio
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Seth Moulton
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Mark Takano
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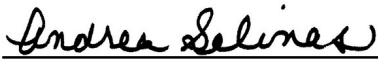
Marc A. Veasey
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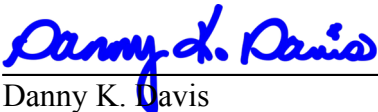
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Paul D. Tonko
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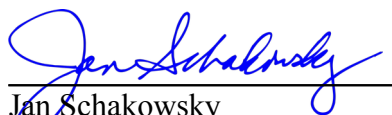
Richard J. Durbin
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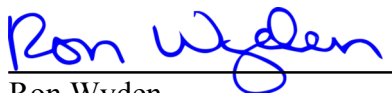
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



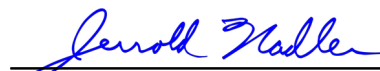
Jan Schakowsky
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Steve Cohen
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Ron Wyden
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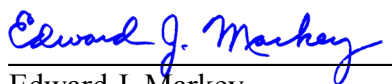
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



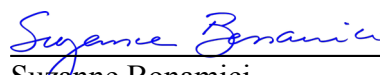
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



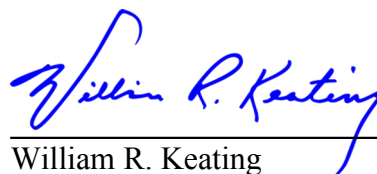
Edward J. Markey
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Michael F. Bennet
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Bernard Sanders
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Gary C. Peters
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Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



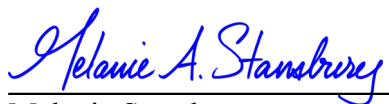
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Cori Bush
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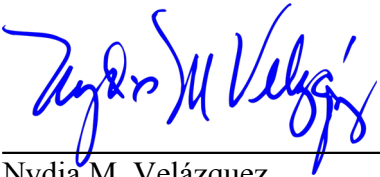
Ted W. Lieu
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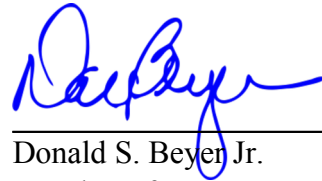
Greg Casar
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Steven Horsford
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Nevada's Fourth
Congressional District



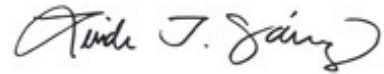
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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Katie Porter
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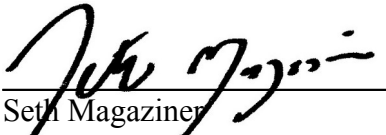
Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



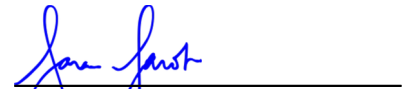
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



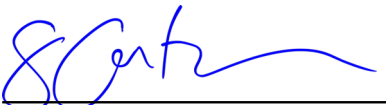
Dina Titus
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Sara Jacobs
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Sean Casten
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Val Hoyle
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Mike Levin
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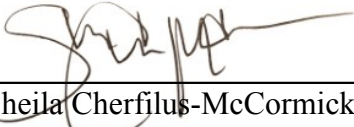
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
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Robert Garcia
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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
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Earl Blumenauer
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Patrick Ryan
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Gwen S. Moore
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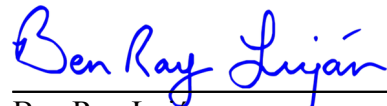
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
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Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



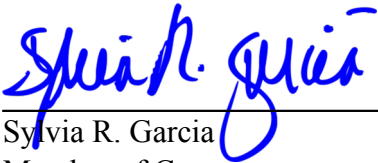
Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



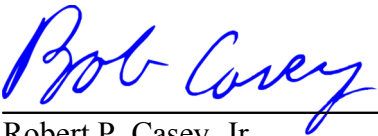
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress




Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



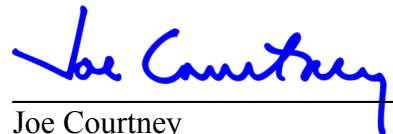
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator




Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



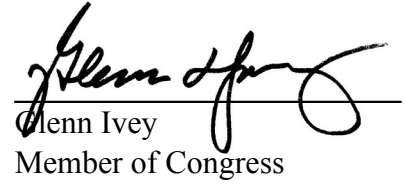
Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress




Joe Courtney
Member of Congress




Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress




Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress




Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



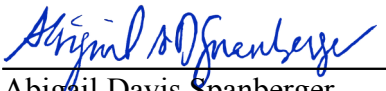
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



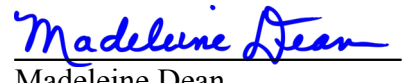
Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



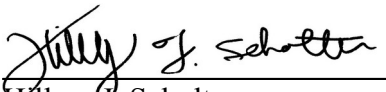
Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



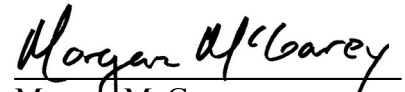
Abigail Davis Spanberger
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey
Member of Congress



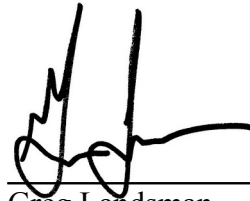
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



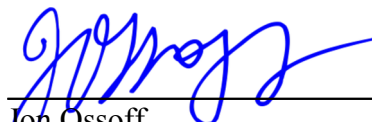
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Jon Ossoff
United States Senator