Date of Hearing: April 9, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Al Muratsuchi, Chair
AB 1111 (Soria) – As Amended March 28, 2025

[Note: This bill was double referred to the Assembly Transportation Committee and will be heard by that Committee as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SUBJECT: Pupil transportation: schoolbuses: zero-emission vehicles: extensions: scrapping

SUMMARY: Changes the date by which 100% of all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of a local educational agency (LEA) to be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), where feasible, from 2035 to 2045. Specifically, **this bill**:

1) Changes the date by which 100% of all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of a local educational agency (LEA) to be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs), where feasible, from 2035 to 2045.

2) Authorizes an LEA to request an extension from the January 1, 2045, deadline from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as follows:

    a) If an LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, the LEA is authorized to request a one-time extension for a term not to exceed five years, provided that LEA can reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology in 2045;

    b) If, commencing January 1, 2050, an LEA that is a frontier LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, the frontier LEA is authorized to request an additional extension for a term not to exceed five years and expiring no later than January 1, 2055, provided that the LEA can reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology in the period in which the extension is sought;

    c) If an LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission school bus is not feasible due to a lack of sufficient infrastructure that is necessary to support the operation of a zero-emission schoolbus, the LEA is authorized to request a five-year extension, provided that the LEA can reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology due to a lack of sufficient infrastructure that is necessary to support the operation of a zero-emission schoolbus, such as insufficient charging or fueling infrastructure. Requires the demonstration to include details regarding the barriers to establishing sufficient infrastructure; or

    d) If an LEA, in consultation with a local fire agency, determines that the regular operation of a zero-emission schoolbus within that local fire agency's jurisdiction poses a significant risk to health and safety that exceed the local fire agency's response

capabilities and resources, and therefore the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission schoolbus is not feasible, the LEA is authorized to request a five-year extension, provided the LEA obtains affirmation from a local fire agency that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school poses a significant risk to health and safety that exceeds the local fire agency's response capabilities.

3) Requires the CARB, in consultation with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, to receive and evaluate an LEA's request and to grant an extension if the LEA reasonably demonstrates the conditions required for the requested extension.

4) Requires any schoolbuses that are replaced pursuant to the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project to be scrapped no later than 24 months from the date of delivery of the replacement vehicles, except when both of the following apply:

    a) The schoolbus is 25 years of age or less at the time of delivery of the replacement vehicle; and

    b) The ownership of the schoolbus has been transferred to another LEA.

EXISTING LAW:

1) Requires, commencing January 1, 2035, 100% of all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of an LEA to be zero-emission vehicles, where feasible. (Education Code (EC) 17927)

2) Authorizes, if an LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, the LEA to request a one-time extension for a term not to exceed five years, provided that both of the following conditions are met:

    a) The LEA can reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology in 2035; and

    b) The CARB, in consultation with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, receives and evaluates an LEA's request, and grants a one-time extension based on the LEA reasonably demonstrating that they cannot meet the requirement. (EC 17927)

3) Authorizes, commencing January 1, 2040, if a frontier LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, the frontier LEA to request annual extensions, with the last extension expiring on January 1, 2045, provided that both of the following conditions are met:

    a) The frontier LEA can reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology in the period in which the annual waiver is sought; and

b) The CARB, in consultation with the CDE and the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, receives and evaluates the frontier LEA's request, and grants an annual extension based on the frontier local educational agency reasonably demonstrating that they cannot meet the requirement. (EC 17927)

4) Defines the following:

a) "Frontier LEA" to mean an LEA that meets either of the following conditions:

i) The total number of pupils in average daily attendance (ADA) at all of the schools served by the LEA is fewer than 600; or

ii) Each county in which a school operated by the LEA is located has a total population density fewer than 10 persons per square mile.

b) "Local educational agency" to mean a school district, county office of education (COE), or charter school. (EC 17927)

5) Defines a "schoolbus" as a motor vehicle designed, used, or maintained for the transportation of any school pupil at or below the 12th grade level to or from a public or private school or to or from public or private school activities. (Vehicle Code (VEH) 545)

6) Requires the California Highway Patrol to inspect every schoolbus at least once each school year to ascertain whether its construction, design, equipment, and color comply with all provisions of law. (VEH 2807)

7) Requires all diesel-fueled schoolbuses with a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) over 14,000 pounds to have a Level 3 PM filter, the highest level verified retrofit, or an original equipment manufactured particulate matter (PM) filter that most commonly comes installed on 2007 model year and newer engines. Prohibits, as of January 1, 2012, schoolbuses manufactured before April 1, 1977, to operate in California. Requires recordkeeping to demonstrate compliance in lieu of a report. (California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 13, 2025(k))

8) Authorizes the governing board of any school district to provide for the transportation of pupils to and from school whenever, in the judgment of the board, the transportation is advisable and good reasons exist therefor. Authorizes the governing board to purchase or rent and provide for the upkeep, care, and operation of vehicles, or to contract and pay for the transportation of pupils to and from school by common carrier or municipally owned transit system, or to contract with and pay responsible private parties for the transportation. Authorizes these contracts to be made with the parent or guardian of the pupil being transported. (EC 39800)

9) Requires, in order to procure the service at the lowest possible figure consistent with proper and satisfactory service, the governing board to, whenever an expenditure of more than $10,000 is involved, secure bids pursuant to the Public Contract Code whenever it is contemplated that a contract may be made with a person or corporation other than a common carrier or a municipally owned transit system or a parent or guardian of the pupils to be

transported. Authorizes the governing board to award the contract for the service to those that are not the lowest bidder. (EC 39802)

10) Requires, if a continuing contract for the furnishing of transportation of pupils in school districts to and from school is made, it must be made for a term not to exceed five years. Authorizes a contract to be renewable at the option of the school district and the party contracting to provide transportation services jointly at the end of the term of the contract. Requires the contract as renewed to include all of the terms and conditions of the previous contract, including any provisions increasing rates based on increased costs. (EC 39803)

FISCAL EFFECT: This bill has been keyed as a possible state-mandated local program by the Office of Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. According to the author, "In 2023, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law California's mandate to convert its school buses to zero-emission vehicles by 2035. This new requirement recognized that some areas of the state faced barriers to implementation that required more consideration such as terrain and route constraints in rural areas and gave more time for compliance to accommodate these areas. Unfortunately, not all barriers to the implementation of this requirement were given full consideration at the time of its passage.

School districts, especially those in rural areas, attempting to prepare for the 2035 deadline have encountered serious limitations in existing electrical infrastructure to support needed charging stations and concerns regarding the capacity of local firefighters to deal with burning electric vehicle batteries. Additionally, the pending zero-emission requirement has lead school bus manufacturers to wind down diesel bus production, making it difficult if not impossible for districts that qualify for a longer implementation period to find busses to operate during that extra time. AB 1111 seeks to give districts both additional time to meet California's new zero-emission standards, a more robust consideration of which districts are not ready due to limited electrical infrastructure or fire protection and allows school districts making the switch to zero emission busses early to furnish their still functional decommissioned busses to districts unable to make the switch at this time. This will ensure a smoother transition to zero-emission busses for California's schools and reduce disruptions in school transportation services for California's students."

Key provisions of the bill. Current law requires, commencing January 1, 2035, all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of an LEA to be zero-emission, where feasible. While there is still about a decade before the prohibition goes into effect, LEAs have expressed serious concerns about their ability to comply with the requirement. In addition, school districts anticipate several challenges with transitioning to zero-emission school buses, including: cost, difficulties with charging infrastructure, and issues with maintenance. Finally, school districts have indicated that it has become increasingly difficult to procure non-zero-emission schoolbuses, resulting in a loss of capacity for transportation programs as older buses reach the end of their life.

The bill also authorizes an LEA to request an extension from the January 1, 2045 deadline from the CARB for any of the following reasons, if 1) the LEA determines the purchase of the zero-emissions schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, 2) if a Frontier LEA

determines the purchase of the zero-emissions schoolbus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints they may request a longer extension than that of a non-frontier LEA, 3) if an LEA determines that the purchase or contracting of a zero-emission school bus is not feasible due to a lack of sufficient infrastructure that is necessary to support the operation of a zero-emission schoolbus, or 4) an LEA, in consultation with a local fire agency, determines that the regular operation of a zero-emission schoolbus within that local fire agency's jurisdiction poses a significant risk to health and safety that exceed the local fire agency's response capabilities and resources.

Finally, the bill requires any schoolbuses that are replaced pursuant to the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project to be scrapped no later than 24 months from the date of delivery of the replacement vehicles, except when both of the following apply: the schoolbus is 25 years of age or less at the time of delivery of the replacement vehicle; and the ownership of the schoolbus has been transferred to another LEA.

The Committee may wish to consider that schoolbuses are the only type of vehicle required in statute to meet a deadline of 2035 for all newly purchased vehicles to be zero emission. Other vehicle types are authorized as a result of regulation.

Zero-emission regulations withdrawn by California. Signed in 2020, the Governor's EO (N-79-20) sets a goal to end sales of internal combustion vehicles by 2045. Specifically, it states that 100% of new passenger cars, light-duty trucks, drayage trucks, off-road vehicles, and equipment sales will be zero-emission by 2035. It also states that medium- and heavy-duty truck sales will be zero-emission by 2045. This EO includes sales of new schoolbuses. The CARB adopted regulations in order to implement this EO, and the regulations set requirements pertaining to the purchase, manufacture, or sale of heavy duty zero-emission vehicles. ***The Committee may wish to consider*** that these regulations required federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approval, and were withdrawn by California from approval in January 2025.

Schoolbus fleets in California. According to a 2022 report from the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), *The 2022-23 Budget: Green School Bus Grant,* school districts that operate their own transportation services own about 15,800 schoolbuses, including small (10 people capacity) and large buses (50 or more people capacity). An additional 9,000 buses are owned by contractors. Out of the 15,800 schoolbuses owned by districts, 10,200 are powered by diesel, constituting nearly two-thirds of their fleet. According to Appendix E of the CARB 2022 report, *SB 1403 School Bus Incentive Program*, staff estimates there are approximately 23,800 school buses operating in California. Nearly 200 school districts in California have at least one battery electric schoolbus. Approximately 570 battery electric schoolbuses are operating in the state.

Limitations of electric schoolbuses. According to the 2022 LAO report, the main limitation for electric school buses is the limited range they can operate between charges. Early models often had a maximum range of between 70 and 90 miles. Recent models have longer ranges, often between 120 and 150 miles; however, pricing for electric schoolbuses varies based on battery capacity and range. These ranges are also highly dependent on the usage and terrain. Other factors affecting the range include the number of stops along the route, driving behavior, and usage of air conditioning and heating. Buses powered by diesel, compressed natural gas (CNG), or propane all have significantly longer ranges than electric buses.

Some school districts in rural and remote parts of the state necessitate long bus routes over difficult terrain to transport students between home and school. Many have raised concerns that the range limitations of the models of electric school buses currently available would require additional charging stations throughout their school district, which would increase costs as well as time the electric bus would be unavailable to transport students while charging. In order to reduce costs, many school districts use one bus to run multiple routes at staggered times throughout the school day. This model may no longer be feasible given the additional time needed to charge the vehicles, and districts may need to purchase additional electric school buses to maintain the same number of routes. Rural school districts also expressed serious concerns regarding the ability of some of their power grid to support the necessary schoolbus charging infrastructure, availability of qualified technicians to repair and maintain schoolbuses and charging stations, availability of replacement parts, and rolling energy blackouts, which make charging stations unreliable.

Electrical fires involving ZEVs. According to information provided by the author's office, the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Research Foundation is conducting an assessment of EV firefighting techniques, and is reviewing lithium-ion battery transit bus fire prevention and risk management, with a report scheduled to be released later this year. Related to lithium-ion battery transit bus fire prevention and risk management, the NFPA specifically notes:

> As the transportation sector undergoes the transition to electrify their bus fleets, the hazards and risk posed by electric bus fleets must be examined. A review of recent electric bus fire incidents found that many of the involved zero-emission buses were connected to chargers at the time of the fire and several incidents occurred while parked in bus depots. Of those parked in bus depots, most of the incidents experienced fire spread beyond the vehicle of origin. Thus, fire prevention and management strategies for transit facilities, bus depots and maintenance facilities that store, charge, or work on electric buses, must also be re-examined.

Funding available for schoolbuses. State and federal funding sources to obtain schoolbuses include:

- Zero-Emission School Bus and Infrastructure incentive project (ZESBI): The ZESBI is intended to cover nearly, if not all, of the full cost of new zero-emission school buses and their accompanying infrastructure for eligible applicants. A total of $500 million was appropriated by SB 114 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 48, Statutes of 2023, for ZESBI. In fiscal year 2023-24, $375 million was allocated to support purchases of qualifying zero-emission school buses, and $125 million was allocated to support infrastructure and associated cost incentives. The ZESBI funding prioritizes grantees operating the oldest internal combustion buses, grantees that are small and rural school districts, grantees that serve a high percentage of students who are foster youths, receive free or reduced-price meals, or are English learners, and grantees purchasing zero-emission buses with bidirectional charging where available.

- The Clean Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project (HVIP Standard): The HVIP Standard offers funding to help offset the incremental cost of zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty truck and bus purchases, including schoolbuses. HVIP approved dealers complete the application on behalf of the fleet, and fleets are not required to scrap an existing vehicle. HVIP Standard is available statewide on a first-come, first-served basis,

and all public school districts and third-party school transportation providers that serve public school districts are eligible for funding.

- Community Air Protection Incentives: Community Air Protection funds are implemented by local air districts. Incentives are available to support early action emissions reductions in communities most affected by air pollution, as well as to support communities selected for air monitoring or emissions reduction programs and those under consideration for future selection. School bus replacements are an eligible project type under Community Air Protection incentives.

- Carl Moyer Program: The Carl Moyer Program is administered by local air districts and provides funding for cleaner-than-required engines and equipment. School buses are one of the many categories of equipment funded through the program. Grant amounts vary depending on the project type.

- Clean Mobility in Schools: Clean Mobility in Schools funds clean transportation and mobility strategies, including electric vehicles and electric vehicle supply equipment in K-12 schools (K-12); car sharing for staff at schools to use ZEVs; curriculum development; workforce training; and outreach to students, parents, and the community.

- Lower-Emission School Bus Program (LESBP): The LESBP is administered by local air districts, and funds new, cleaner technology school bus replacements and retrofit devices that significantly reduce toxic particulate matter emissions from diesel school buses.

- Federal Clean School Bus Program: With funding from H.R.3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, 117th Congress (2021-2022), the EPA's Clean School Bus Program provided $5 billion to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. The CARB supported efforts by LEAs in applying for this grant by providing letters in support of funding applications.

- Federal Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA): The DERA of 2010 allows the EPA to offer grants and rebates to reduce harmful emissions from older, dirtier diesel vehicles. EPA offers DERA funds via National Grants, Tribal Grants, Rebates, and State Allocations. The CARB has used DERA's State Allocations to fund retrofits and replacement of diesel school buses since 2011.

- Federal Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Grant Program: With funding from H.R.3684 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, 117th Congress (2021-2022), the EPA Clean School Bus Program provided $5 billion over five years (fiscal years 2022-2026) to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models.

Diesel bus emissions can have harmful health effects. Diesel buses emit several pollutants that can have negative effects on human health. According to a 2005 study in the Journal of Exposure Analysis and Environmental Epidemiology, *Characterizing the Range of Children's Air Pollutant Exposure During School Bus Commutes*, minimizing commute times, using the cleanest buses for the longest routes, and reducing bus caravanning and idling time will reduce children's exposure to bus-related pollutants. The 2022 LAO report lists the most concerning pollutants to be nitrogen oxides and PM. Nitrogen oxides can irritate the human respiratory tract

and can increase the risk of asthma and other respiratory diseases, and PM refers to tiny solid particles and liquid droplets that can become embedded in the lungs or bloodstream. Sustained exposure can cause breathing problems and lung damage. According to the CARB, in 1998, California identified diesel PM as a toxic air contaminant based on its potential to cause cancer. Other agencies, such as the National Toxicology Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health have concluded that exposure to diesel exhaust likely causes cancer.

Home-to-school transportation overview. California does not require districts to transport students to and from school. Instead, state law gives discretion to the district governing board to provide pupil transportation, "whenever in the judgment of the board the transportation is advisable and good reasons exist." Federal law requires districts to provide transportation to students with disabilities if required by their individual education program (IEP), and to homeless students. Starting in the 1970's several school districts ran large transportation programs to comply with court-ordered desegregation requirements.

According to a 2014 report by the LAO, *Review of School Transportation in California*, approximately 12% of California students rode the school bus on a daily basis in 2011-12. Nationally, up to 50% of students ride the bus to school. The report suggests the lower rate of school bus usage in California may be partially due to the greater proportion of students who live within two miles of school in California, an estimated 70%, versus 50% nationally. According to 2009 data, California students travel to and from school using a variety of modes: 54% by automobile, 28% by walking/biking, 14% by school bus, and 4% using public transit or other methods.

Approximately 275 districts, or one-quarter of the districts in the state, transport fewer than 10% of their students, while 100 districts transport more than half of their students. The districts transporting larger shares of students tend to have smaller enrollments, be located in more rural areas, and enroll larger proportions of students from low-income families. Many districts running larger transportation programs reported that they offer such services because many of their students lack viable alternatives for getting to school. Other reasons included long distances between homes and schools, and unsafe conditions affecting travel between home and school.

Home-to-School (HTS) Transportation Reimbursement funding was established by AB 181, Chapter 52, Statutes of 2022, and amended by AB 185, Chapter 571, Statutes of 2022. It provides reimbursement funding for school districts and COEs based on the prior year eligible transportation expenditures and prior year Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) transportation related add-on funding.

Despite the recent augmentation to transportation reimbursement, due to historically limited state funding for this purpose and lack of universal transportation programs, many LEAs now contract with third-party private transportation companies to transport specific student populations – primarily students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless youth. LEAs that contract with third-party providers report economies of scale, but few state laws directly govern this type of student transportation. Some third-party providers operate under permits authorized and regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as transportation network companies authorized to transport minors or as charter party carriers.

Schoolbus safety. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), "Students are about 70 times more likely to get to school safely when taking a bus instead of traveling by car. That's because school buses are the most regulated vehicles on the road; they're designed to be safer than passenger vehicles in preventing crashes and injuries; and in every state, stop-arm laws protect children from other motorists." In comparison with other forms of transportation, the NHTSA's 2021 publication, The Unedited Summary of School Bus Report, shows that the fatality rate for school buses is 0.2 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) compared to 1.5 fatalities per 100 million VMT for cars. Since 2010, school buses annually have averaged about 26,000 crashes resulting in 10 deaths – 25% were drivers; 75% were passengers. Frontal crashes account for about two passenger deaths each year.

Is there a link between taking the bus to school and lower absenteeism? According to a 2017 Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis article, *Linking Getting to School with Going to School*, children who took the schoolbus to kindergarten had fewer absent days over the school year and were less likely to be chronically absent compared with children who commuted to school in any other way. The article reported, "Prior research in absenteeism has concluded that students with more absences have fewer opportunities to learn in school and perform more poorly on exams as a consequence of missing school. Hence, if taking the bus lowers absenteeism, then access to this resource may benefit students in ways that have implications for individual learning and, ultimately, academic success. There is also the potential for aggregate effects. Districts may benefit by mitigating the need for remedial activities, as fewer absent students implies fewer missed opportunities to learn at school. In this way, bus taking may indirectly benefit aggregate school performance."

School locale types. The U.S. Department of Education's National Center on Education Statistics (NCES), establishes school local classification as a general geographic indicator that describes the type of area where a school is located. NCES classifies all territory in the U.S. into four types – City, Suburban, Town, and Rural – and each type is divided into three subtypes based on population size or proximity to populated areas. The classifications begin with standard urban and rural criteria defined by the Census Bureau, and NCES extends these designations to provide additional detail. For example, rural areas are designated by the Census Bureau as those areas that do not lie inside an urbanized area or urban cluster. Some federal education programs define rural to include all of the following locale types:

1) Suburban-Small (23): Census-defined suburban territory outside a principal city and inside an urban area with population less than 100,000 and greater than or equal to 50,000.

2) Town-Fringe (31): Census-defined town territory inside an urban area with population less than 50,000 that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban area with population of 50,000 or more.

3) Town-Distant (32): Census-defined town territory inside an urban area with population less than 50,000 that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urban area with population of 50,000 or more.

4) Town-Remote (33): Census-defined town territory inside an urban area with population less than 50,000 that is more than 35 miles from an urban area with population of 50,000 or more.

5) Rural-Fringe (41): Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster.

6) Rural-Distant (42): Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster.

7) Rural-Remote (43): Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster.

Arguments in support. The California School Boards Association writes, "Current law requires that LEAs only purchase or contract for zero-emission schoolbuses starting January 1, 2035, where feasible, with one very limited exemption.

Recently the CSBA conducted a survey of 154 superintendents from across the state that found only 11 percent were extremely confident that their local educational agency (LEA) could meet the above requirement. The CSBA survey also asked about challenges experienced by LEAs that have already adopted zero-emission electric schoolbuses as well as issues anticipated by those LEAs that have not adopted these buses, and found that maintenance, cost, and sufficiency of charging infrastructure and working with local utility providers all ranked towards the top for both groups.

LEAs have also raised concerns regarding the viability of using zero-emission schoolbuses for irregular travel with longer drive times, such as field trips or athletic events, even if zero-emission buses can be used for many daily routes. Additionally, many LEAs have indicated it has become more difficult to procure conventional or low-emission schoolbuses for routes where there is no feasible zero-emission option, an unintended consequence of existing law. These are significant barriers that hinder the successful adoption of zero-emission schoolbuses that need to be overcome."

Arguments in opposition. Earthjustice writes, "We wish to express our strong opposition to AB 1111, which would needlessly push back California's transition to zero-emission school buses by an additional 10 years. Critically, the proposed delay means that diesel school buses will likely continue to take our kids to school well beyond 2045 and into the 2060s. California's pupils, our health, and our climate deserve better.
As of 2023, 62% of the publicly owned school buses in California were still fueled by diesel, with about half of these being from 2007 or earlier. Pollutants from mobile sources are particularly harmful to children—leading to reduced lung development and increasing risk of lung cancer, asthma symptoms, bronchitis, and pneumonia. Exposure to emissions has also been linked to poor academic performance. Zero-emission technologies are here, and our children deserve every effort to provide these school buses.

Now, more than ever, it is imperative that California remains committed to supporting the essential transition to zero-emission school buses in order to protect the health of children and communities."

Recommended Committee Amendments. Staff recommends that the bill be amended as follows:

- Require, commencing January 1, 2035, 100% of all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of an LEA to be ZEVs, except for an LEA that is either:
    - A frontier LEA; or
    - An LEA that both: 1) has an ADA of 2,500 or fewer, and 2) is located in a rural area. Define rural to mean an LEA with at least one school located in an area designated in National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Locale Code numbers 23, 31, 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43.
- Require, commencing January 1, 2045, 100% of all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of all LEAs to be ZEVs.
- Add to the proposed extension option for LEAs that determines a ZEV schoolbus is not feasible due to the lack of sufficient infrastructure that is necessary to support the operation of a ZEV a provision for the lack of availability of sufficient repair and maintenance.
- Related to the proposed requirement for any schoolbuses that are replaced pursuant to the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Initiative Project to be scrapped no later than 24 months from the date of delivery of the replacement vehicles that the exemptions apply only to those LEAs that either qualify for or have been granted an extension by the CARB.

Related legislation. AB 579 (Ting), Chapter 445, Statutes of 2023, requires, commencing January 1, 2035, all newly purchased or contracted schoolbuses of an LEA be zero-emission vehicles.

AB 181, Chapter 52, Statutes of 2022, and amended by AB 185, Chapter 571, Statutes of 2022, established the Home-to-School (HTS) Transportation Reimbursement funding was established by. It provides reimbursement funding for school districts and COEs based on the prior year eligible transportation expenditures and prior year Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) transportation related add-on funding.

AB 2933 (O'Donnell) of the 2021-22 Session would have required the SPI, commencing with the 2022–23 fiscal year and for each fiscal year thereafter, to apportion to each school district, COE, entity providing services under a school transportation joint powers authority, or regional occupational program/academy that provides pupil transportation services, either 100% of its school transportation apportionment for the 2020–21 fiscal year or 100% of its reported HTST costs as determined by a specified report, whichever is greater. This bill was held in the Senate Education Committee.

AB 2731 (Ting) of the 2021-22 Session would have required all newly purchased, contracted, or operated schoolbuses of an LEA to be zero-emissions by January 1, 2035, would have extended continuing schoolbus lease and rental contracts for pupil transportation services, and would have extended continuing schoolbus lease and rental contracts containing purchase or cancel option for pupil transportation services. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 760 (Cooper) of the 2019-20 Session would have established a new calculation methodology for home-to-school transportation for school districts, COEs, based on a COLA, in order to

equalize transportation funding, commencing with the 2019-20 fiscal year. This bill was held in the Assembly Education Committee.

AB 1469 (Grayson) of the 2017-18 Session would have required school districts to provide free transportation to and from school for pupils attending public, noncharter schools that receive Title I federal funding, subject to an appropriation for this purpose. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1572 (Campos) of the 2015-16 Session would have required a public, noncharter school to provide free transportation to a pupil attending a school that is eligible for Title I federal funding. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 891 (Campos) of the 2015-16 Session would have required an LEA to provide free transportation, to and from school, to a pupil entitled to free or reduced-price meals or who attends a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Option, under either of the following conditions: 1) the pupil resides more than one-half mile from the school; or 2) the neighborhood through which the pupil must travel to get to school is unsafe because of stray dogs, no sidewalks, known gang activity, or other reason documented by stakeholders. Would have required an LEA to designate a liaison to be responsible for implementing a plan to ensure that eligible pupils are provided transportation in a timely manner. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SB 191 (Block and Vidak) of the 2015-16 Session would have established a formula to provide state funding for pupil transportation services. This bill was held in the Assembly Education Committee.

AB 694 (Wolk) of the 2007-2008 Session would have increased HTST funding to eligible districts through a specified formula that is equivalent to 90% of their approved HTST costs. This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 1052 (Leslie), Chapter 324, Statutes of 2005, requires a school district or COE that employs a driver to operate a school transportation vehicle, and the driver of that vehicle, to participate in a program that is consistent with the federally controlled substance and alcohol use testing requirements that apply to school bus drivers.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California School Boards Association

Opposition

Advanced Energy United
California Environmental Voters
Calstart INC.
Climate Action California
Climate Center; the
Earthjustice
Jobs to Move America

Los Angeles County Electric Truck & Bus Coalition
Sierra Club California

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