



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Sens. Harckham, Mayer, Kennedy and Kaplan Team Up with Bedford School District and GreenPower Motor for a Zero Emission / Electric School Bus Demonstration

[Pete Harckham](#)

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Bedford, NY – New York State Senators Pete Harckham, Shelley B. Mayer, Tim Kennedy and Anna Kaplan and the Bedford Central School District, in conjunction with the GreenPower Motor Company, hosted a demonstration today of a zero emission, fully electric school bus at Fox Lane High School.

The demonstration gave attendees an opportunity to learn more about zero emission / EV school buses in regard to their life cycle, range, cost and maintenance. Also, attendees were given an opportunity to take a test ride on GreenPower Motor’s new 90-passenger, Class 8, Type D school bus known as The BEAST, which stands for Battery Electric Automotive School Transportation.

“To meet the greenhouse gas reduction goals in New York’s The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, we will have to take serious action, including transitioning to zero emission vehicles,” said Harckham. “School buses, which run mostly on diesel fuel, are a top cause of air pollution. This demonstration offered a lot of information and answered important questions about electric battery school buses, which are certainly on their way to wider use.”

Senator Shelley B. Mayer, chair of the Senate Committee on Education, said, “We see the effects of climate change every day. We cannot wait to address it. Thank you to GreenPower Motor Company for demonstrating what a zero emission, fully electric school bus could look like in our community. I look forward to working with Senators Pete Harckham, Tim Kennedy and Anna Kaplan, our colleagues, education stakeholders and Governor Hochul on an approach to transition to electric school buses across New York.”

Senator Tim Kennedy, chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation, said, “New York has enacted the most comprehensive and aggressive climate change legislation in the nation, and made historic, sustainable investments in our infrastructure and transportation systems statewide. We need to continue to think big—and that includes by enacting real policy to incentivize the transition of school bus fleets to electric, and underscoring our commitment to a greener, environmentally-just New York.”

Senator Anna M. Kaplan, chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business, said, “Electric school buses are a triple-win for our community: protecting our kids from harmful diesel fumes, reducing our impact on climate change and saving schools money on gas and maintenance. The time to make the switch is now, and I’m proud to stand with my colleagues Senator Harckham, Senator Kennedy, and Senator Mayer in previewing this vital new technology.”

Attendees at the electric bus demonstration included school district officials, local residents and students, as well environmental and climate change advocates from groups such as Bedford 2030, Croton 100, Mothers Out Front, Hudson Valley Electric Auto Association and Yorktown 100.

Patty Buchanan of Croton 100 said, “Adoption of electric school buses is an immediate imperative for three main reasons. First, they are better for taxpayers because they save money over the lifetime of the bus due to higher efficiency, lower maintenance costs and lower fuel costs. Second, they drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which, according to a consensus among global scientists, is urgently required to ensure a stable climate. Third, continuing to use diesel buses is harmful to the health of our school children due to particulate emissions.”

Seth Leitman, a.k.a. The Green Living Guy and president of the Greater Hudson Valley Electric Vehicle Association, said, “Electric buses do three amazing things. They save energy and maintenance costs for local school districts across the country, so overall, their costs are significantly less than diesel counterparts. Second, they create local jobs in America. And third, it is a zero emissions vehicle. Imagine all the particulate matter and noxious chemicals not being emitted while the kids come outside to get on the bus. It’s healthier and cleaner for the region, the country and the world.”

Midge Iorio, executive director of Bedford 2030, said, “Electrifying our local district fleets is of utmost importance. Transitioning our school buses off of polluting fossil fuels will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, address health concerns, and it will send a message to our children that we are taking steps to combat climate change, to ensure a healthier future.”

While there have been improvements, air pollution is still a problem in more populated areas of New York. The American Lung Association’s latest [report card](#) shows that air pollution is putting 168,000 seniors, nearly 90,000 people (including 17,000 children) with asthma and 458,000 people of color at risk in Westchester County.

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 has set two important goals: limit statewide greenhouse gases to 40% of 1990 levels by 2030 and 85% by 2050; and achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions across New York State’s economy.

“That’s why zero emissions vehicles, including trucks and buses, are on their way,” said Harckham, who introduced and helped enact a law last year requiring new sales of passenger cars and trucks in New York to be zero emissions by 2035. Earlier this year, Governor Kathy Hochul proposed that the entire school bus fleet in the state be entirely electric by 2035.

Right now, there are more school buses in the U.S. than commercial buses, trains and air travel services combined. Each school day about 24 million children ride on over 480,000 school buses. More than 90% of the buses run on diesel fuel, a known carcinogen, and school age children are exposed to 5 to 15 times more of air toxins than the rest of our population. Annually, school buses produce 3,000 tons of cancer-causing soot and 95,000 tons of smog-causing compounds and particulates.

“GreenPower is excited to demonstrate the purpose-built, all-electric BEAST in the Bedford Central School District and discuss building the future of sustainable transportation in schools,” said Ryne Shetterly, vice president of sales and marketing at GreenPower. “GreenPower’s BEAST delivers what Sen. Harckham, his colleagues in the New York State Senate, and Gov. Kathy Hochul have all been pushing for: zero emission, all-electric school buses that can safely transport children to and from school. As we further expand our production throughout the East Coast, school districts can look forward to a steady supply of safe, purpose-built vehicles as they electrify their fleets.”