

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
AGRICULTURE
BANKS
COMMITTEES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS
ELECTIONS
FINANCE
HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
INSURANCE

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



GEORGE M. BORRELLO
SENATOR
57TH DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE
ROOM 707
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG.
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
PHONE: (518) 455-3563
FAX: (518) 426-6905
DISTRICT OFFICE
2-6 EAST SECOND STREET
SUITE 302
JAMESTOWN, NY 14701
PHONE: (716) 664-4603
FAX: (716) 664-2430
SATELLITE OFFICE
WESTGATE PLAZA
700 W. STATE STREET
OLEAN, NEW YORK 14760
PHONE: (716) 372-4901
FAX: (716) 372-5740

December 14, 2023

Hon. Kathy Hochul, Governor
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

As a new legislative session approaches, school officials have been urging me to ‘tell Albany’ that the state’s electric bus mandate is a major concern. The extremely high costs of electric buses, the short transition timeline and the logistical challenges are all problems they believe have not been adequately addressed.

On behalf of these schools and the communities they serve, I am requesting that you include in your Executive Budget a provision to rescind the electric bus mandate or commit to fully funding the conversion.

With the first mandate scheduled for 2027, just three years from now, school budget officers are looking ahead at their capital costs and concerned about where the funds will come from. A new, full-size electric bus costs \$400,000 - \$450,000 - triple the price of a conventional bus which is approximately \$130,000.

With 45,000 school buses in the state, full conversion by 2035 will cost approximately \$20 billion. The cost over and above what school districts already pay for replacement buses is projected at between [\\$8 billion and \\$15 billion](#) statewide. These totals don’t even include the required infrastructure upgrades including installation of charging stations, electrical improvements, bus garage renovations and so on.

Without question, the \$100 million in grants the state just made available for electric school bus purchases won’t be nearly enough. That amount is enough to fund about 250 buses statewide. With over 800 school districts statewide, that isn’t even one bus per district. Even the additional \$400 million to be allocated in future rounds won’t make a dent in the cost of conversion.

Unless the state commits to fully funding the transition or taking the common-sense step of eliminating the mandate, the costs of this politically driven initiative will fall on already-overburdened local property taxpayers.

That is unacceptable and I hope you agree.

Funding isn’t the only problem with this mandate. There are other issues particularly important to rural districts that haven’t been adequately considered. Frigid temperatures decrease traveling range, which could affect school bus routes in the coldest portions of the state. School buses are also used for other purposes including trips to athletic events and field trips, which often involve exceeding the roughly 100 mile range a bus can travel on a single charge.

Additionally, in rural communities and small communities around NY, many bridges are not rated to handle the increased weight of electric buses. A typical 72-passenger diesel school bus weighs 24,300 pounds. A 72-passenger electric bus weighs 36,000 pounds.

Overall, the electric bus mandate, like much of New York's climate agenda, is being rushed into place without adequate funding, regional flexibility or input from stakeholders. Those who stand to lose the most from this unfunded mandate are, once again, New York State taxpayers.

The new legislative session will offer opportunities to protect school districts and taxpayers from the unsustainable financial burden that will result from this rushed mandate. My colleagues and I would value the opportunity to work together toward this goal.

Sincerely,



Senator George M. Borrello
57th District



Senator Robert G. Ort
Senate Minority Leader
62nd District



Senator Jacob Ashby
43rd District



Senator Patrick Gallivan
60th District



Senator Joseph A. Griffo
53rd District



Senator Mario R. Mattera
2nd District



Senator Dean Murray
3rd District



Senator Thomas F. O'Mara
58th District



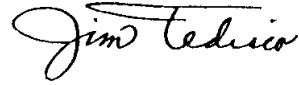
Senator Peter Oberacker
51st District



Senator Rob Rolison
39th District



Senator Daniel G. Stec
45th District



Senator James Tedisco
44th District



Senator Mark Walczyk
49th District



Senator Alexis Weik
8th District



Senator Bill Weber
38th District