

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 27, 2025

The Honorable Lee M. Zeldin
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Zeldin,

In the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, Congress created the Clean School Bus program, which, through grants and rebates, funds the replacement of existing school buses with clean vehicles and the necessary fueling infrastructure, reducing harmful air pollutants. However, since January 20, 2025, our offices have received concerning and contradictory reports on the status of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean School Bus Program, with reports and information from awardees indicating the EPA is not disbursing obligated Clean School Bus program funding to recipients with signed agreements. We urge you to resume implementation of the law and immediately release any withheld funding. Schools must be able to continue their efforts to provide safe and healthy transportation for the more than 25 million children who travel to class by bus every day.

The Clean School Bus program has provided funding across all 50 states and to nearly 60 federally recognized tribes, prioritizing low-income, rural, and Tribal students.¹ To date, EPA has supported 8,500 Clean School Bus projects in more than 1,200 school districts.² We look forward to celebrating the environmental and health benefits the program brings to communities across the country. But according to reports, the EPA has withheld monies from Clean School Bus program funding recipients, including those who have signed agreements with the agency, giving no explanation and in contravention of existing law.³

To provide these health and cost savings benefits to our children and continue supporting the boom in electric bus manufacturing that is creating good-paying jobs across the country, the EPA must implement the Clean School Bus program as Congress directed. Following your confirmation hearing, you committed to the continued implementation of this program when you responded: “I commit to following the law. I cannot prejudice the outcome of any particular policy review.”⁴ Recognizing that Congress authorizes and appropriates federal funding—and explicitly established the bipartisan Clean School Bus program—it is your duty to implement the program and ensure program awardees have confidence in working with the EPA and are receiving funding.

¹ *EPA Clean School Bus Program: Fourth Report to Congress Fiscal Year 2024*, U.S. EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality (Jan. 2025), <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2025-01/420r24004.pdf>.

² *Id.*

³ See, e.g., Mike Lee, *Late for school: Trump's funding freeze halts e-bus delivery*, Politico Pro (Feb. 18, 2025), <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2025/02/18/late-for-school-trumps-funding-freeze-halts-e-bus-delivery-00204485?source=email>; Jean Chemnick, *EPA lifts one spending freeze and announces another*, Politico Pro (Feb. 10 2025), <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2025/02/10/epa-lifts-one-spending-freeze-and-announces-another-00203278>.

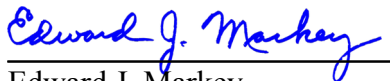
⁴ *Hearing on the Nomination of the Honorable Lee M. Zeldin to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency*, 119th Cong. (2025) (Questions for the Record).

Because we continue to receive reports of the Clean School Bus program inconsistently available through payment portals, please respond in writing to the following questions by March 6, 2025:

1. For both rebates and grants under the Clean School Bus program, what is the status of the disbursement of already obligated funds to recipients?
2. On what legal basis did the EPA end its disbursement of already obligated funds for the program? Please identify the authority under which the EPA cut off funding.
3. If the disbursement of any obligated Clean School Bus Program grants and rebates currently remains frozen for any awardees, when will it resume? If you cannot provide a date, please explain why, including the legal basis for not resuming disbursements and an explanation of the EPA's grant and rebate-review process.
4. Will you commit to following the law by obligating the remaining Clean School Bus program grants and rebates that have yet to be awarded, or that have been awarded but not yet disbursed, through FY2026?

Thank you for your prompt attention to these questions.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



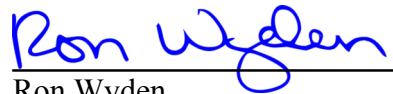
Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



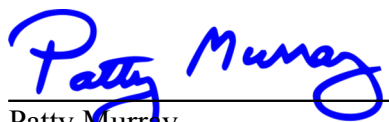
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Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



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United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
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