

**Clean Cities Coalitions Policy Action Alert
Green School Bus Grant Program – Call Your Senator ASAP**

Background:

Within the next few weeks, the Senate will be considering a comprehensive energy bill. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) have developed and introduced legislation that would create Clean School Buses Grant Program. This program would replace the oldest and dirtiest diesel school buses-- those built before 1991-- with cleaner alternatives and would retrofit newer buses with. The alternative fuels and advanced technologies. A similar program was included in both House and Senate energy bills last session before the comprehensive energy bill died. UCS is coordinating a campaign to include this program in the comprehensive energy bill currently moving through the Senate.

Senate offices are now considering whether to include this program as an amendment to the energy bill, so it's important to act now so that the Senate version of the energy bill includes this important program.

Specifically, the House version (H.R. 1461) of this program would provide \$300 million in grant funds over three years for school districts to replace the oldest and dirtiest diesel school buses with ones that run on cleaner alternatives .such as natural gas and low-sulfur diesel fuels. The grant monies would go towards the cost of the bus and the associated infrastructure needed to fuel the bus – up to \$15,000 per bus. There is an opportunity to get similar legislation that would replace older buses and retrofit newer buses in the Senate energy bill. **So the program could, potentially, get thousands of new, cleaner, alternative fueled and advance technology buses on the road!**

Of the over 450,000 school buses on the road today, about one-third are aging diesel vehicles built to outmoded health and safety standards. These buses, built before 1991, are not compatible with emissions control technologies designed to clean up tailpipe emissions and should be replaced.

Diesel pollution has been linked to increased asthma rates, missed school days, hospitalizations, chronic bronchitis, heart disease, cancer, and even premature death. There are clean and cost-effective alternatives to standard diesel-powered school buses, including natural gas, propane, biodiesel and cleaner petroleum diesel fuel and buses equipped with particulate traps.

Actions:

1. Phone your Senators' office in the Capitol right away, and talk to his or her staff person. The contact information for select states and sample talking points are below.
2. Send this alert to members of your coalitions and interested friends to generate more calls into Senate offices.

3. Please send me (Sam Spofforth: sam@cocfc.org) an email letting me know who you called, the name of the person you spoke to and the results of the call. I'll report this to UCS. This is important because it will build credibility of our network of Clean Cities coalitions.

People in all states should call both of their Senators, but UCS is focusing particular attention on solidifying support in CA, NY, WA, OR, IN, SD, NM, and IL. For those people in these states, here is contact information. Please ask for designated staff.

California: Senator Feinstein ask for Mike Buchwald 202-224-3841
Senator Boxer ask for Laurie Saroff 202-224-3553

Illinois: Senator Durbin ask for Catherine Potter 202-224-2152
Senator Fitzgerald ask for Joe Watson 202-224-2854

Oregon: Senator Wyden ask for Josh Sheinkman 202-224-5244
Senator Smith ask for Valerie West 202-224-3753

Washington: Senator Cantwell ask for Angela Becker-Dippman 202-224-3441
Senator Murray ask for Doug Clapp 202-224-2621

New Mexico:

Senator Bingaman ask for Jennifer Michaels, staff for Bingaman on the Energy Committee 202-224-4103

Senator Domenici ask for John Peschke, staff for Domenici on the Energy Committee 202-224-4971

South Dakota: Senator Daschle ask for Peter Umhofer 202-224-2321

Indiana: Senator Bayh ask for Emily Duncan 202-224-5623

New York: Senator Clinton ask for Gabrielle Tenzer 202-224-4451
Senator Schumer ask for Ryan McConaghy 202-224-6542

Sample Alert Talking Points

- I'm calling to strongly urge Senator XXX to support the Clean School Bus Grant Program. This is an important program that will help school districts ensure that our children can ride to school in safe and CLEAN buses.
- It's my understanding that the school bus program is in the House energy bill and may be offered as an amendment to the Senate energy bill during floor deliberations.
- We think that it is very important to get the program established so that school districts can replace and retrofit their dirty buses.
- The program should also be structured to ensure that taking the oldest, dirtiest buses off the road is given the highest priority.
- Thank you.

For more information contact:

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or call Sam Spofforth, Central Ohio Clean Fuels Coalition, (614) 292-5435.