



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

## Testimony

Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams

Monday, December 17, 2018

New York City Council Committee on Environmental Protection

I want to thank the City Council, Chair Costa Constantinides of the Committee on Environmental Protection, and all of the co-sponsors of this important piece of legislation, including its prime sponsor, Council Member Daniel Dromm, for holding today's hearing.

I am testifying in support of Intro 0455-2018, which would require all school buses in New York City to be all electric, zero-emission vehicles (EV) by September 1, 2040, and will limit the age of non-electric buses to 10 years from manufacture date, rather than the current 16.

In February of this year, my office's Renewable and Sustainable Energy Taskforce (ReSET) hosted a legislative breakfast that was primarily focused on the future of alternative fuels for transportation. One of the presenters, Mr. Tevin Grant, discussed the potential that New York City had to make an enormous impact on student health and the City's environment by switching to electric school buses. I am glad that the City Council is giving this possibility its full attention.

Every day, tens of thousands of school-aged children take one of approximately 9,000 buses to school in New York City. They sit inside while the buses idle and release harmful fumes into the air they are breathing. When they arrive at school, they may learn about protecting the environment in their science class, or take part in a recycling initiative organized by the school's sustainability coordinator, a mandated position that suggests the importance of environmental stewardship. They then climb back onto an idling bus and breathe in the fumes for the second time that day as they make their way home. We owe them a better environment to succeed. We owe them the respect of putting our money where our mouth is and of not putting them in harm's way every school day. And while there has been improvement in newer "clean diesel" buses, they do not eliminate the risk.

More than 13 percent of New York City school children suffer from asthma. That number climbs to 22 percent if you are a Black child and 15 percent if you are Latino.<sup>1</sup> We can begin to change those statistics and EV school buses can have a significant role in positively impacting children's

---

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/about/press/pr2017/pr088-17.page>.

health outcomes. Requiring EV school buses can also help us by being a catalyst for siting EV charging stations and promoting electric non-bus vehicles that are also good for the environment.

In my office's 2017 report, "Fueling Brooklyn's Future: Refueling Needs in a Resiliency Era,"<sup>2</sup> I called for additional investment in EV infrastructure to help prepare for an emergency like we experienced during Superstorm Sandy. EV buses can prime the market for a faster rollout of electric vehicles, and, in turn, more charging stations across New York City.

New York City clearly sees the benefits of EV buses, as they have purchased them for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) bus fleet. It is time to make the same commitment to our students by requiring our school buses to be all electric by the start of the 2040 school year.

I wholeheartedly support this legislation and look forward to working with the City Council to make this vision of a greener future for our children a reality.

---

<sup>2</sup> See [http://www.brooklyn-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FuelingBrooklynReport\\_2017-Final.pdf](http://www.brooklyn-usa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FuelingBrooklynReport_2017-Final.pdf).