



PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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A Call to Reform Zero-Emission School Bus Law

The Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Law must be reformed. The proponents of the law to require schools to purchase only ZEBs by July 1, 2027 and utilize only ZEBs by July 1, 2035 were well-intentioned. However, the law poses significant challenges for the Pine Plains Central School District (PPCSD).

After two years of planning for this massive transportation transition, utility providers, manufacturers, and our own Fleet Electrification Assessment conducted by Central Hudson with fleet advisory services from ICF Resources LLC, have made it clear that a 100% ZEB requirement for PPCSD cannot happen over the next decade.

The Fleet Electrification Assessment submitted by Central Hudson and ICF Resources LLC on May 10th, 2023 reported a Mandate Hardship by stating, "For Pine Plains, 13 vehicles drive a daily mileage that surpasses the range of existing electric school buses. The battery market is quickly developing and more options with extended range are expected to enter the market in coming years. However, at this point in time, it is a barrier to the mandate" (p. 35).

PPCSD encompasses 140 square miles. At the time of the Fleet Electrification Assessment, PPCSD had 20 active school bus runs and 13 of those buses were not recommended for transition to electric vehicles due to the insufficient range of current EV models (p. 31). That is nearly 2/3 of our fleet not recommended for transition to electric buses.

Additional Barriers to the Zero Emission Bus Law

- **Power Grid:** There is tremendous infrastructure and power supply development and deployment that has not begun as yet.
- **Supply Chain:** Currently, manufacturers are taking at least 18 months to build and deliver electric buses from the day of purchase.
- **Future Cost:** Currently, the cost of a gasoline bus is approximately \$150,000. The cost of an electric bus is approximately \$500,000. Yes, grants help with the difference for now. However, who covers the cost difference in the future?
- **Safety Concerns:** In case of emergency circumstances, we need to be ready to safely and reliably move students to different locations. Charging time of electric buses is a major barrier, especially with the distances PPCSD buses travel.

While there are significant health and environment benefits to ZEBs, there are also significant feasibility challenges and additional costs to our school district. We are not stating that we do not want to comply with the Zero Emission Bus Law; however, comprehensive analysis by industry experts concludes that we cannot comply with this law with the current state of technology.