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January 25, 2023

Minnesota Senate Transportation Committee  
95 University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Testimony letter in support of electric school bus legislation and funding

Dear Transportation Committee Members,

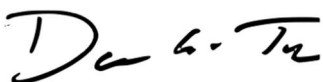
I am writing to urge you to accelerate Minnesota's transition to zero-emission electric school buses and ensure that Minnesota receives its fair share of the \$5B IJA Clean School Bus Program rebates and grants.

As a Physician, University Professor, former high school science teacher, and MN350 volunteer; I am deeply concerned about the success of all Minnesota students and the health of our children, communities, and the earth. The evidence is clear that reducing school bus diesel pollution benefits children's health and academics. Large-scale randomized studies have shown that students who were exposed to lower diesel bus emissions had 8% fewer absent school days, better lung function testing, and improved academic test scores.<sup>1,2</sup> Diesel particulate matter increases the risk of numerous health conditions including asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and birth anomalies.<sup>3</sup> Converting the US school bus fleet to zero-emission electric buses will eliminate over 5 million tons of harmful carbon emissions annually.<sup>4</sup>

Minnesota lags behind all other Midwest states in acquiring electric school bus funding.<sup>5</sup> In 2022, the IJA Clean School Bus Program awarded the first \$1B providing fully-funded electric school buses for hundreds of schools nationwide. Unfortunately, Minnesota received only \$1.6M to purchase 4 electric school buses. In comparison, Michigan received \$54M for 138 electric buses and Wisconsin received \$25M for 65 electric buses. Several states have recently passed electric school bus legislation.<sup>6</sup> New York committed to achieve a fully zero-emission school bus fleet by 2035. Colorado passed a school bus electrification grant program with initial funding of \$65M and is investing a transportation technical assistance program for schools.

I am proud of Minnesota's rich history of excellence in education and health. However, we are way behind other states when it comes to pursuing school transportation that will significantly improve children's health and academics. I urge Minnesota lawmakers to commit to zero-emission school bus transportation by 2035, fund grants for schools to purchase electric school buses, and convene a state agency that will support schools in the electric school bus transition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Trajano". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Daniel Trajano, MD, MBA

References:

- <sup>1</sup> Austin W., Heutel G., and Kreisman D. Brooking (April 2019)
- <sup>2</sup> Adar, SD et al. Adopting Clean Fuels and Technologies on School Buses. Pollution and Health Impacts in Children. American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine (April 2015)
- <sup>3</sup> Diesel, Small Particle Emissions & Public Health. Oregon PSR (Accessed January 2023)
- <sup>4</sup> Skibell, A. Electric School Buses Reduce Pollution, but New Infrastructure Deal Slashed Funding. Scientific America (July 2021)
- <sup>5</sup> Trajano, D. Electric School Bus Infographic and Fact Sheet Google Slides (January 2022)
- <sup>6</sup> Electric School Buses Win Big in US State Legislative Sessions. WRI (July 2022)