



## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 7205

### AN ACT CONCERNING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN CONNECTICUT

February 22, 2019

**To:** Honored Chairs Sen. Leone and Rep. Lemar and Distinguished Members of the Transportation Committee

**From:** Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of HB 7205**, An Act Concerning the Accessibility of Electric Vehicles. We at CTLCV are committed to promoting equity for low-income and minority communities who are disproportionately impacted by pollution and climate change, and HB 7205 would greatly benefit the most vulnerable among us.

Converting Connecticut's public fleet to electric vehicles (EVs) would be a significant step towards reducing air pollution. In 2018, the American Lung Association gave seven of Connecticut's eight counties an F for air quality, and the remaining county received a D. It is clear that we must take action to protect the air we breathe from pollution.

Transportation is one of the leading causes of poor air quality, and any attempt to fight pollution must include electrification of our vehicles—especially our public buses, trucks, and light fleet.

By investing in clean buses, Connecticut would also be investing in cleaner air and healthier communities. While zero-emission buses may cost more initially, they cost much less to maintain than their diesel counterparts. Each diesel bus replaced with a zero-emission bus is equivalent to taking twenty-seven cars off the road, and it can save the state upwards of \$11,000 per year in fuel and maintenance costs. Given our continual budget strains as well as our aggressive emissions goals, it is imperative we invest in clean buses.

Connecticut also has an opportunity to include school buses in its electrification efforts. Every day, over 450,000 students are forced to breathe toxic fumes from diesel school buses. These fumes are proven to cause asthma, bronchitis, and even lung cancer. Asthma is the leading cause of absenteeism for elementary school students in Connecticut, and the Connecticut Department of Public Health estimates that one in eight students in low-income neighborhoods suffers from asthma. We cannot ignore the impact these dirty diesel buses have on our children.

Exposure to pollution from diesel fumes at a young age will have life-long health consequences for Connecticut children, especially in low-income communities. We cannot afford to wait any longer to address this issue. Connecticut lives depend on it.

We urge the committee to not only **VOTE YES on HB 7205**, but to also include the electrification of our school buses in this initiative.

Thank you for your consideration as you deliberate on HB 7205.

Sincerely,



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