



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

Senator George Borrello and Republican Colleagues Urge Governor Hochul to Repeal Electric Bus Mandates or Fully Fund The Conversion

GEORGE M. BORRELLO December 14, 2023

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Local property taxpayers could be hit with crushing tax increases without state action

ALBANY, NY – Senator George Borrello and 14 of his Republican colleagues in the Senate have sent a letter to Governor Hochul requesting that she rescind the electric bus mandate for public schools or commit to fully funding the conversion.

The electric bus mandates were passed in the 2022-23 state budget to help the state meet the lower emissions targets of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). The requirements are that new school bus purchases be zero emission by 2027 and all school buses in operation be zero emission by 2035.

“School officials in my district are all sounding the alarm about the state’s unfunded electric bus mandate and the crushing financial costs it will mean for districts. With the first deadline in just three short years, school officials are deeply concerned about their ability to afford the electric buses and infrastructure upgrades that will be necessary,” said Sen. Borrello.

A new, full-size electric bus costs \$400,000 - \$450,000 - triple the price of a conventional bus which is approximately \$130,000. With 45,000 school buses in the state, full conversion by 2035 will cost approximately \$20 billion. The cost over and above what school districts already pay for replacement buses is projected to cost between **\$8 billion and \$15 billion** statewide.

“While \$100 million in grant funding for electric buses was just announced, that amount will cover 250 buses. With over 800 school districts in the state, that isn’t even one bus per district. Even the remaining \$400 million that will be allocated in future rounds won’t make a dent in the costs of converting school bus fleets statewide,” Sen. Borrello added.

“Local property taxpayers must not be hit with the bill for this politically driven mandate. New York’s property taxes are already among the highest in the nation and are a key factor in our outmigration of residents. If the governor and legislative leaders won’t take the common-sense step of eliminating the mandate, they must commit to fully funding this transition,” said Sen. Borrello.

He explained that school officials are also raising concerns over logistical considerations that aren't accounted for in the electric bus requirement.

"It is well known that frigid temperatures have a significant impact on traveling range, which could affect school transportation in the coldest parts of the state. There is no flexibility for rural schools in this situation. Similarly, there are bridges in rural communities which are not rated to handle the increased weight of electric buses," said Senator Borrello.

"Just like the state's entire climate agenda, the electric bus initiative has been long on virtue signaling but short on crucial details, none more glaring than how schools are expected to pay for this exorbitantly expensive transition."

"Governing by edict, without gathering input from those on the ground who must implement these plans, is a recipe for disaster," Sen. Borrello added. "It is time to course correct by either lifting the mandates or committing the funding. The 'magical thinking' that has characterized this entire climate agenda is going to bankrupt our state unless state leaders face reality and adjust their unworkable policies."

A copy of the letter that was sent to Governor Hochul is attached.

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