



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel G. Stec

Stec Speaks at Press Conference to Replace Electric Bus Mandate

DANIEL G. STEC February 12, 2024

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Senator Dan Stec (R,C-Queensbury) joined Senate and Assembly Republican colleagues and school superintendents from across New York at a press conference calling on Governor Hochul and the Legislature to rescind the electric school bus mandate and replace it with a pilot program that would evaluate electric bus performance in New York State's urban, rural and suburban areas.

"The electric bus mandate for our schools is expensive and unfeasible. A diesel-powered school bus has an average cost of \$150,000. An electric bus is two-to-three times that price,

not even factoring in charging infrastructure, meaning replacing and maintaining a fleet of electric buses will cost school districts millions of dollars,” said Stec. “Studies show electric buses have an average range of about 150 miles at 70 degrees. When it’s 20, the range is 85-90 miles. For context, I was recently speaking with the superintendent at the Massena School District and each of their buses drives 70 miles per day. For the Saranac Lake School District, the largest school district geographically speaking, their fleet of 16 buses drive an average of 100 miles each day.

“In North Country communities like Massena and Potsdam, the average January temperatures are a high of 25 and a low of 5. Given the unreliability of charging electric vehicles in extreme cold and the long distances buses have to travel to pick up students in these rural districts, you’re asking schools to spend a lot of money for a significantly less efficient mode of transportation,” he added. “Instead of forcing an expensive, potentially unreliable bus mandate on schools, let’s take a step back. Replacing this mandate with a pilot program evaluating the efficacy of electric buses statewide would prevent further financial distress and allow our schools the flexibility they need.”

The electric school bus mandate, enacted in 2022, requires new school buses purchased to be zero emission by 2027 and all school buses in operation to be electric by 2035. There is no provision made for the geographical disparities, diverse weather conditions or unique travel demands of the state’s school districts. In addition, this is another mandate from Albany that burdens cash-strapped school districts and taxpayers.