



September 18, 2019

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
State of the New York
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

On behalf of the ElectrifyNY Coalition and allied organizations, we congratulate you on the signing of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). Your collaboration with the legislature on this historic law has established New York State as a global climate leader. Meeting the statute's pollution reduction mandates will require dynamic implementation plans across all sectors of the economy, with transportation looming as the biggest challenge. Your leadership on the implementation of the CLCPA will be crucial to New York's success.

Your administration has already taken significant steps to begin to address pollution from the transportation sector with initiatives like ChargeNY, EVolve NY, the Drive Clean Rebate, and the passage of congestion pricing. We write today to urge you to build on that success by directing the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to immediately promulgate regulations to fully transition all public transit buses in New York State to electric vehicles by 2040, which will help eliminate dangerous air pollution that affects the health of our families and communities.

The State of California is already moving in this direction. At the end of 2018, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the California Innovative Clean Transit Rule. The new CARB standard directs the relevant transit agencies in the state to ensure that by 2040 all public transit vehicles in the state will be zero-emissions. Such an initiative will make huge strides in improving the health of millions, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and stimulating investment and innovation towards cleaner transit.

New York has also made promising strides in this direction, with the MTA's 2018 announcement that they plan to transition to an all-electric bus fleet by 2040. Given New York City's size, the MTA accounts for nearly 10% of bus purchases in North America. The MTA's market share, combined with the purchasing power of New York's other transit agencies, will help jumpstart growth in the nascent electric bus manufacturing industry in the state. New York should not miss this opportunity to expand the MTA's initiative to all fleets across the state, by undertaking a rule making process similar to California's program.

The science is well established that tailpipe pollution is a prime contributor to unhealthy levels of smog and soot in our air. Both are known to make people sick and cause premature death. The transportation sector is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in New York.

Given that the Trump administration is currently proposing to rollback national clean vehicle standards, it's abundantly clear that the federal government will not be issuing any regulations to lower pollution from transit vehicles - or any vehicles for that matter - in the short term. Addressing climate change and air pollution is an urgent problem. Thus, New York should join with California to drive down the emissions of transit vehicles and be the driver of the national effort to create a zero-emissions bus market.

Thank you for considering our request. We all stand ready to assist you and the DEC with adoption of this life-saving program.

Sincerely,

New York City Environmental Justice Alliance
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Environmental Advocates of New York
Sustainable Westchester
Jobs to Move America
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Sierra Club
New Yorkers for Clean Power
Natural Resource Defense Council
New York Lawyers in the Public Interest
Demos
Renewable Energy Long Island (reLI)
Protect the Adirondacks
HabitatMap
NY Working Families
Rochester People's Climate Coalition
Syracuse Cultural Workers

cc: Basil Seggos, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation
Dale Bryk, Deputy Secretary for Energy and Environment
Amanda Lefton, First Assistant Secretary for Energy and Environment