

SENATE No. 2288

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Rebecca L. Rausch

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act establishing a zero-emission school buses grant program.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Rebecca L. Rausch

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex

SENATE No. 2288

By Ms. Rausch, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 2288) of Rebecca L. Rausch for legislation to establish a zero-emission school buses grant program. Transportation.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)**

An Act establishing a zero-emission school buses grant program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 90 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 7C the
2 following new section:-

3 Section 7C 1/2. Zero-Emission School Buses Grant Program

4 (a) As used in this section, the following words shall have the following meanings unless
5 the context clearly requires otherwise:-

6 “Secretary”, the secretary of the executive office of education

7 “Zero-emission school bus”, a school bus that produces no engine exhaust carbon
8 emissions.

9 (b) Subject to appropriation and utilizing revenues received pursuant to article XLIV of
10 the Massachusetts constitution, as amended by article CXXI thereof, the secretary shall establish
11 a grant program to offset the cost difference between purchasing or contracting the use of school

12 buses that are zero-emission and school buses that are diesel-powered. Grant funds may also be
13 used to offset the costs associated with the purchase or contracted use of charging infrastructure
14 and related upgrades. Any municipal or regional school district in the commonwealth shall be
15 eligible to apply for a zero-emission school bus grant. The secretary shall prioritize
16 environmental justice communities in awarding grants under this program.

17 (c) The secretary shall publish information about the zero-emission school bus grant
18 program online, including without limitation application forms and submission deadlines. The
19 secretary shall update this information annually, not later than October 1, and issue notification
20 of this update to the senate and house committees on ways and means, the joint committee on
21 education, the joint committee on telecommunications, utilities and energy and the joint
22 committee on transportation. Not more than 6 weeks after the annual update, the secretary shall
23 issue direct notification about the zero-emission school bus grant program established under this
24 section to municipal and regional school districts where the median household income is below
25 the commonwealth's median or where the 5-year average rate of emergency department visits for
26 childhood (ages 5-14 years) asthmas is greater than the commonwealth's 5-year average rate for
27 the immediately preceding 5 years. The department of public health shall provide the secretary
28 with the asthma-related rate information necessary to implement the provisions of this paragraph.

29 (d) The secretary shall publish online and regularly update data regarding program usage
30 including but not limited to: (i) the number and award amounts of grants provided; (ii) the name
31 of each school district receiving a grant; (iii) the make, model and type of school bus or buses for
32 which a grant was issued; (iv) the school bus operational route or routes, if available; and (v) the
33 estimated total greenhouse gas emissions reductions achieved from the grants issued. Annually
34 not later than December 31, the secretary shall issue an annual report on grant program activity

35 to the senate and house committees on ways and means, the joint committee on education, the
36 joint committee on telecommunications, utilities and energy and the joint committee on
37 transportation.

38 (e) The operational services division, in conjunction with the secretary and the
39 Massachusetts clean energy center, shall establish a statewide contract through which municipal
40 and regional school districts can purchase or lease zero-emission school buses. The division, in
41 conjunction with the department and the Massachusetts clean energy center, may include electric
42 vehicle charging infrastructure purchasing or leasing in said statewide contract, or establish a
43 distinct statewide contract through which municipal and regional school districts can purchase or
44 lease electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

45 (f) The secretary shall promulgate regulations to administer the program established
46 under this section not later than 6 months after its effective date.