

Support House Bill 2118 (Del. Keam)

Electric Vehicles Fund for Clean School Buses

Address Climate Crisis by Reducing Carbon Emissions

US Energy Information Administration reports that transportation sector is responsible for 48% of Virginia's carbon emissions.

Union of Concerned Scientists found that, compared to diesel emissions, buses using electric batteries produce 67% lower life-cycle emissions, even if they buy electricity from a utility.

US PIRG study show that, while electric school buses are more expensive to purchase, over the lifetime of the vehicle, fuel and maintenance costs will save \$170,000 per bus.

Virginia is home to the second largest school bus fleet in the country (for example, Fairfax County schools alone operates 1625 diesel buses) so we can make a big difference.

Nationwide, 24 million school children travel on 480,000 school buses, while there are only 140,000 public transit buses in the country. Converting school buses from diesel to electric will address the carbon footprint produced by the most extensive mass transit system in the country.

Protect the Health of Our Kids with Cleaner Air

Diesel emissions contain Benzene, a known carcinogen, and particulate matter (PM 2.5), increasing the risk and incidence of asthma and heart disease. These tiny and invisible particles can pass directly into the bloodstream when breathed into the lungs, triggering severe health conditions, including premature death.

Presence of Benzene and PM 2.5 are increased up to six times inside a diesel school bus.

In Virginia, 17,000 school buses transport 1.5 million kids to school, and some of them ride inside these buses for up to four hours a day.

Asthma rate for Virginia children are significant: 129,316 have asthma, and studies reveal that between 19.6% and 22.3% of middle and high school-aged children are expected to have lifelong respiratory disease.

Among children ages 5 to 17, asthma is one of the top causes for missing school days; in 2013, asthma impacted 13.8 million missed school days.

Converting school buses from diesel to electric will reduce costs incurred by families for their kids' healthcare, medication, extra childcare, while helping students stay in school.

Create a State Grant Program to Fund More Electric School Buses

HB 2118 relies on new revenues from a currently untaxed diesel fuel to pay for local schools to buy electric school buses to replace old diesel buses.

Bill prioritizes localities with high level of asthma and poor air quality, among other criteria.

#CleanBuses4Kids

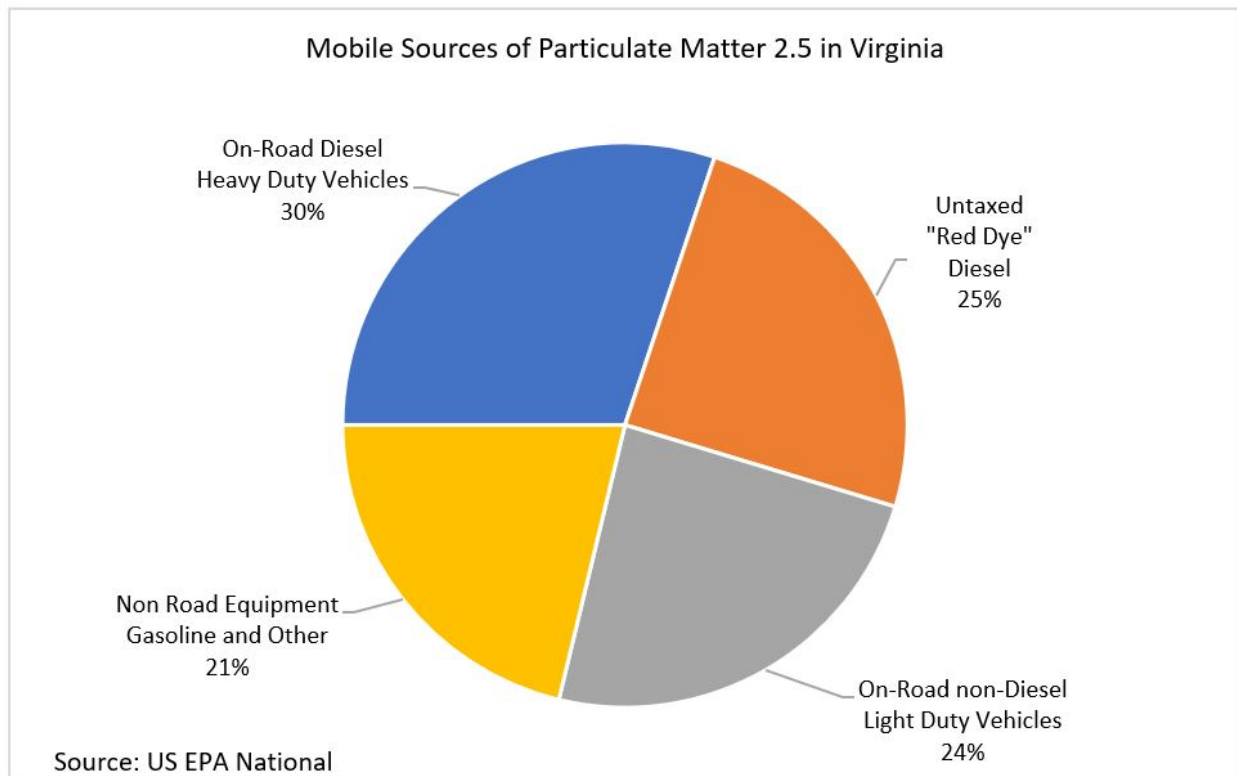
Why Is Some Diesel Untaxed in Virginia??

In 2019, about 330 million gallons of diesel were sold without paying ANY state or local taxes.

Often called “red dye” diesel, this product produces the same hazardous particulate matter pollution road diesel does, except that it is approximately 50 cents per gallon cheaper than those used by motorists.

Historically, this untaxed diesel was viewed as a farm subsidy to support agriculture workers whose equipment like tractors do not use public roads. But today, farmers are not the only Virginians to purchase “red dye” diesel. This untaxed fuel is used by many industries to power heavy equipment like bulldozers, excavators, ATVs, and boats.

According to the US EPA, untaxed diesel accounts for 25% of all transportation particulate matter pollution which is hazardous to human health.



Del. Keam's House Bill 2118 sets a modest 5 cents per gallon tax on this currently untaxed “red dye” diesel which could raise an estimated \$5 to \$10 million per year into Virginia's treasury.

HB 2118 targets this new revenue for a state grant program to assist local schools convert their diesel school buses to electric vehicles to reduce carbon emissions and protect kids' health.

Importantly, HB 2118 maintains the exemption for Virginia's essential agriculture industry by carving out from this bill those farmers who do not currently pay this diesel tax.

Support HB 2118 #CleanBuses4Kids