



Clean Buses for Healthy Niños!

Dirty diesel school buses emit dangerous pollutants that kids breathe into their developing lungs, causing respiratory illnesses, aggravating asthma and exposing youth to cancer-causing pollutants. That's why the Maryland League of Conservation Voters' (MDLCV) Chispa Maryland program is calling on Governor Larry Hogan and decision makers to put the health of Maryland's youth and communities first by using the state's \$71 million Volkswagen (VW) settlement to fund clean energy, zero-emission school buses.

In Maryland, five counties have failing air quality grades.

Across the country, approximately 25 million children take school buses, and are exposed to diesel exhaust, which can negatively impact their health. In Maryland, there are approximately 623,000 kids who ride school buses to over 24 school districts, which serve more than 879,000, over half of whom are Latino or black. Here in Maryland, nearly 1 in 10 suffer from asthma.

Our children have the right to breathe clean air, and polluting buses shouldn't endanger them in their pursuit to acquire an education.



STATING THE FACTS

- Maryland receives \$71 million from the \$2.7 billion Volkswagen Settlement
- 1 in 10 children suffer from asthma
- Zero-emission buses can reduce greenhouse emission by almost 80 percent
- 1 electric bus can save up to \$11,000 a year



Questions & Answers

What causes unhealthy air?

Diesel vehicles, including school buses, emit large amounts of nitrogen oxide into our atmosphere. This pollution can cause respiratory problems including asthma attacks, which are the leading chronic illness and the number one cause of school absences for children and adolescence.

How is MDLCV's Chispa taking action?

MDLCV's Chispa program launched its Clean Buses for Healthy Niños campaign here in Maryland. We need zero-emission buses for the 86 million miles of school bus routes that crisscross our communities. The children and adults in our communities carry the horrible burden of the pollution that these buses emit. We're organizing with our communities to build the political power necessary to ensure that clean bus fleets become a reality. Together, we can take a stand to let Governor Hogan know that we won't wait for cleaner air. It's time for #CleanBuses4Kids now.

In Maryland, Chispa is focusing its fight for clean school buses in one of the largest school districts in the state—the Montgomery County Public Schools. It's a district with a high proportion of children who are at-risk for respiratory illnesses, and who are exposed to a tremendous amount of pollution.

What is the VW settlement for and how much money is available in my state?

The VW settlement allots \$2.7 billion for the Environmental Mitigation Fund. This mitigation trust is specifically for states to implement projects that reduce nitrogen oxide emissions. Maryland received an initial allocation of \$71 million in December 2016.

Why the VW settlement? Well, VW cheated federal emissions tests, and polluted the air we breathe with toxins emitted by diesel vehicles that increases respiratory illnesses and furthers the effects of climate change.

Chispa Maryland believes these funds should be re-invested in initiatives that stand to enhance the air quality of local communities and school districts, especially in low-income and communities of color where students and families are most at risk of breathing dirty air, and are disproportionately suffering from pollution.

In February, a bill was introduced to designate the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Maryland Energy Administration as joint administrators of the state's Environmental Mitigation Fund. This bill also allocates that at least 15 percent of the fund be used for purposes related to electric vehicle infrastructure.

What's the impact of switching from a diesel bus to a zero-emission bus?

Clean buses mean cleaner air and healthier niños and communities. While zero-emissions buses may cost more up front, they cost 30 percent less to maintain than their diesel counterparts, and they reduce greenhouse emissions by almost 80 percent. Nitrogen oxide emissions from buses are particularly dangerous because they increase ozone pollution, and have detrimental impacts on our health, especially for children. Every diesel bus replaced with a zero-emission bus is equivalent to taking 27 cars off the road, and can save upwards of \$11,000 per year in fuel and maintenance costs.

How can I get involved?

MDLCV's Chispa staff is working with volunteers and promotores to fight for clean buses for healthy niños. Let your voice be heard by sending a text to **877-877** with the opt-in word **BUSES**. We will get in touch and share ways for you to get involved.

For more information contact Chispa Maryland Director, Ramon Palencia-Calvo at rpalcalvo@mdlcv.org.

