NYLPI Memo of Support: Intro 455-A

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI) supports this legislation, which would mandate a transition to a zero-emissions, all-electric school bus fleet by 2035 for the Department of Education and its contractors.

This bill will ensure that for the first time the City’s clean-fleet goals include both publicly owned and privately contracted school buses.

A rapid transition from diesel- and gas- powered buses to all-electric buses will benefit all New Yorkers by reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and will especially benefit those impacted most by the current, fossil fuel-intensive school bus system: students with disabilities (who disproportionately ride buses), environmental justice communities (where bus depots are disproportionately located), and school bus drivers, staff, and maintenance workers exposed to bus fumes for long periods each day.

We appreciate this City Council’s multi-year effort to pass an electric school bus mandate and note that the reporting requirements in this bill give the Council a critical, ongoing role in monitoring the City’s progress toward an all-electric school bus fleet over the next thirteen years and in ensuring the City prioritizes installation of electric bus charging infrastructure in environmental justice communities.

As school buses and other municipal fleets transition to all-electric power, it is also critical that local government do everything possible to build a renewable and resilient local electricity generation to power these vehicles, and to support the creation of good, green local jobs in manufacturing and maintaining electric vehicles and infrastructure.

As the largest school district in the nation with a massive fleet of 10,000 school buses, New York City is poised to become a national and global leader by investing in large-scale electric fleets. We look forward to working with members of the council and the next administration to successfully implement this law and replicate its success elsewhere.

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For more information, contact Justin Wood, Director of Policy, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest:
jwood@nylpi.org / 212.244.4664 ext 474