

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

September 23, 2024

The Honorable Michael Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Regan,

I am writing in support of Woodland School District's application to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Heavy Duty Vehicle Grant Program. Woodland School District, in partnership with Highland Fleets, is seeking \$3.92 million to purchase and maintain 14 electric school busses.

Woodland School District, located in Cowlitz and Clark counties in southwest Washington state, serves over 2,400 students from pre-K to 12th grade. The seven public schools in the district have a history of forward-thinking initiatives aimed at improving student and community well-being and environmental stewardship. According to the EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality, communities in Cowlitz and Clark counties experience poor air quality because of high ambient diesel particulate matter concentration. These counties meet the EPA's 2024 Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program criteria to be considered disadvantaged and include the 10,000 people located in the greater Woodland area and the students in the Woodland School District.

To help reduce diesel emissions and improve air quality the Woodland School District is teaming up with Highland Fleets to apply for the EPA's Clean Heavy Duty Vehicle Grant Program to purchase and maintain 14 electric school buses. If successful, the grant funding will cover the costs associated with acquiring the electric buses, establishing the necessary charging infrastructure, and ensuring ongoing maintenance of the clean buses. Highland Fleets has experience working specifically with school districts to electrify and operate school bus fleets. Currently, the school district uses mostly class six size diesel school buses, a contributing factor to diesel emissions in the Woodland community.

In addition, the Woodland School District's purchase of the 14 electric buses would help Southwest Washington's electric grid reliability. The buses would act as batteries that can provide power during periods of high power demand or natural disasters. This will help meet the State of Washington's clean energy goals, while decreasing costs and increasing the reliability of the Woodland School District's transportation infrastructure.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the Woodland School District's application to the Clean Heavy Duty Vehicle Grant Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maria Cantwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Maria Cantwell

United States Senator