



Adaptive Design
association, inc.



April 2, 2020

Honorable Corey Johnson
New York City Council
250 Broadway, Suite #1804
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Johnson,

The undersigned groups want to thank you for dedicating your entire State of the City address to discussing the importance of fighting climate change. With the passage of every season, it becomes increasingly apparent that the effects of a warming planet are a present threat rather than a distant projection. We appreciate your attentiveness and leadership, and look forward to working with you to achieve our common goals.

In particular, we applaud your pledge to transition all New York City school buses to electric by 2040. As you know, the New York League of Conservation Voters and the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest have been building a diverse coalition of groups and pushing for passage of legislation, Intro-455 that would do just this. With existing federal funding programs, and Volkswagen Settlement funds becoming available this year, now is the time for New York City to lead the country and begin transitioning its approximately 10,000 school buses to all-electric. Furthermore, with unemployment skyrocketing, electric bus manufacturing and infrastructure investment can be a vital source of good, green domestic jobs.

As you know, diesel school buses create local air pollution and contribute to climate change by emitting an average of 5.3 million tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions nationwide each year, including 113,850 tons in New York City alone. In addition to these environmental impacts, diesel exhaust can aggravate or lead to serious respiratory illnesses, such as asthma.

Children are most vulnerable to these impacts due to their smaller, developing lungs. Exposure for disabled children is even higher given the fact that they typically spend more time riding school buses. Already in New York City, asthma is the number one reason children miss school, and the number one reason for child hospitalizations. In some of our city's environmental justice communities, 1 in 3 children suffer from asthma.

While electrifying our school bus fleet won't solve childhood asthma, it can help. The burden is felt for families with children in low income communities and communities of color, where asthma can create even more financial hardships because of medical costs and when parents have to miss work to care for a sick child.

That's why we have formed this coalition to secure the passage of Intro 455. Again, we thank you for understanding the urgency of this issue and making it a priority. We look forward to working with you on moving this forward.

Sincerely,

Julie Tighe
President
New York League of Conservation Voters

Justin Wood
Director of Organizing and Strategic Research
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Anthony Buissereth
Executive Director
North Brooklyn Neighbors

Ellen McHugh
Co-Chair
Citywide Council on Special Education

Benjamin Fuller-Googins
Program and Planning Director
Carroll Gardens Association

Debbie Meyer
Founding Member
Dyslexia Taskforce

Lael Goodman
Environmental Justice Program Manager
North Brooklyn Neighbors

Tamara M. Morgan
Community Partnership Coordinator
Adaptive Design Association, Inc.

Amanda Haught
Information Specialist
United We Stand for New York

Lourdes Rivera-Putz
Executive Director
United We Stand for New York

Sonal Jessel
Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
WE ACT

Amy Ming Tsai
Council Member
Citywide Council for District 75

Lavinia Mancuso
Executive Director
Everyone Reads

350 Brooklyn

Michelle Norris
Parent of a student with a disability

Josh Weitzman
Parent of a student with a disability