

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2201

May 20, 2025

The Honorable Tariq Bokhari
Acting Administrator, Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Administrator Bokhari:

I am writing to request flexibility under the Low or No Emission Grant Program for public transit authorities in Michigan's First District that have encountered operational challenges with the deployment of electric buses funded through this program.

Several transit authorities in my district were previously awarded funds through this program to purchase zero-emission electric buses. At the time of application, these authorities selected electric vehicles in good faith, hoping to modernize their public transportation fleets and contribute to cleaner air and reduced emissions. Since then, however, these authorities have encountered serious performance issues related to the operation of these electric buses in the extreme weather conditions common to Northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula – where extended periods of freezing temperatures have been found to significantly diminish battery life, limit range, and affect overall vehicle reliability.

After an extensive review of alternative technologies, these transit authorities identified low-emission propane-powered buses as a more practical option that would better suit their cold-weather needs – and notably, without compromising the Low or No Emission Grant Program's goal of reducing vehicle emissions.

Despite these buses being an eligible use of grant funds under the program, transit authorities in my district have so far been unable to secure approval from the FTA to modify their original grant agreements. As a result, they are currently faced with a difficult choice: either move forward with a technology that is not suited to their operating environment, or lose the opportunity to modernize their fleets.

Given the administration's strong emphasis on practical, results-driven investments and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, I respectfully urge the FTA to consider granting flexibility in these cases. Supporting the use of low-emission propane-powered buses in areas where electric buses are simply not feasible would not only uphold the Low or No Emission Grant Program's mission, but also ensure that federal investments are effectively and efficiently utilized.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or if further information is needed.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Bergman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jack Bergman
Member of Congress