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## **SB 114 Grants for Zero-Emission School Buses and Infrastructure**

The Washington Unified School District appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and ideas to the California Energy Commission's (CEC) Work Group #2, which is discussing the SB 114 Grants for Zero-Emission School Buses and Infrastructure. These grants are crucial as they could help with the high costs of zero-emission buses, enabling smaller districts to participate in the program without sacrificing our service quality or financial stability.

As a small district in the Central Valley, serving a population of 2,400 students across approximately 90 square miles, we are committed to upgrading our fleet to more sustainable options. However, our transition efforts to zero-emission buses face significant challenges, especially given the current limitations on the range of electric buses. Our conventional diesel buses efficiently cover multiple routes within our expansive area, but their electric counterparts often have a maximum range of only 100 miles per charge. This limitation is compounded by our region's harsh weather conditions, with high temperatures, which may further reduce battery efficiency and range.

We recognize and appreciate the importance of transitioning to zero-emission vehicles. It is crucial to acknowledge the potential impacts on our operational efficiency. Given the range limitations, replacing one diesel or CNG bus often means requiring two electric buses to cover the same mileages/ routes without disrupting service.

Considering these unique challenges faced by smaller and rural districts, it might be beneficial if the criteria for bus replacement could be adjusted to better accommodate districts with fewer than 2,501 students. Smaller districts like ours do not always have spare buses. This situation forces us to use older buses for parts or keep them in service longer than might be ideal, as a cost-saving measure. Allowing the replacement of buses that are no longer in working order, rather than those that are still operational, could significantly aid smaller districts in participating in the program without sacrificing our service quality.

We are eager to continue our progress towards a cleaner, more sustainable future, and we appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective.

Thank you.