

Saanvi Lanke

7th Grade Student

Testimony in Favor of Supplemental Appropriation #25-67 to FY25 Operating Budget

Hello Montgomery County Council,

My name is Saanvi Lanke, and I am a student who has attended Montgomery County Public Schools since Kindergarten. I am speaking to express my support for approving the Clean School Bus Grant for the FY25 operating budget.

As a county, we have already taken important steps to convert our school buses to electric. But the majority of Montgomery County's fleet still runs on diesel, and diesel-powered buses are harmful to our environment and our health. They emit nitrogen oxides and particulate matter that pollute the air, release greenhouse gases, and contribute directly to climate change.

If we don't take action, the environment will continue to deteriorate before our eyes, leaving future generations to deal with the consequences. One of the biggest barriers to obtaining electric buses has been a lack of funding, but now, with this grant, we have the opportunity to move forward more efficiently and effectively.

Electric buses produce zero tailpipe emissions, helping to improve the air quality that our students, teachers, workers, and families breathe. As a student, I've ridden both diesel and electric buses. I've found that electric buses are much quieter and even help reduce my motion sickness, something I've also heard echoed by my peers in class discussions.

Montgomery County has positioned itself as a leader in clean transportation, with one of the largest electric bus fleets in the nation and a goal of going fully electric. By including this grant in the FY25 budget, we have a chance to build on that leadership and continue moving toward a healthier, more sustainable future.

This grant should be seen not just as an agenda item, but as a public commitment to our students, to our environment, and to the future we want to create. My biggest ask is that once this

supplemental appropriation is incorporated, we continue engaging with the community to build an electric bus plan that works for everyone. The first step is essential, but the journey that follows is ground-breaking.

Let's not view this as a burden but as an opportunity, a step forward not just for us but also for the generations to come.

Thank you so much for your time,

Saanvi Lanke