



**Testimony of Mo-Yain Tham, NY Senior Researcher, Jobs to Move America  
Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Transportation  
February 15, 2022**

Members of the Committees, thank you for this opportunity to speak on the proposed Executive Budget. My name is Mo-Yain Tham and I am the NY Senior Researcher with Jobs to Move America. We are a strategic policy organization focused on making sure our public investments do the most public good -- creating good jobs, opportunities, and healthier communities.

Jobs to Move America, alongside our allies from ElectrifyNY, urge you to consider two significant transportation transitions: the electrification of public transit buses through the Green Transit, Green Jobs bill and the campaign for electric school buses.

The Green Transit, Green Jobs bill, ([S3535B/A3090](#) & [S3405/A2083](#)) includes JMA's signature good jobs procurement policy, called the US Employment Plan (USEP). The USEP would allow transit agencies to utilize a "best value" framework in order to encourage bidders to "compete up" to win the contract. Bidders are given extra credit for proposing good wages, benefits, and retraining- such as training diesel-fuel mechanics to work on electric buses. Manufacturers can also commit to building facilities in NY state which would help bring good green jobs. Once the bidder wins the project, these commitments become enforceable in the contract.

The Green Transit, Green Jobs bill will help NY achieve its ambitious zero emission goals required in the Climate Leadership and Protection Act. The bill also ensures this transition maintains and creates good family sustaining jobs at transit agencies and in manufacturing.

With electric school buses, there is the opportunity to protect the health of students, drivers and mechanics. To do this right, we need to make sure there is equitable funding for school districts in disadvantaged communities to offset the upfront costs for electric school buses (ESB).

One way to help bring down the cost is through statewide "best value" solicitation of ESBs through NYSERDA or the Office of General Services in order to have better prices, quality, training, and jobs. Through a centralized "best value" contracting framework, a statewide master contract would encourage bulk bidding which could help bring the prices down.

In addition, we encourage a small amendment to Education Law to allow "best value" contracting for school bus services. Currently, the education law does not allow this, which is a disservice for students as well as drivers and workers. Utilizing a "best value" framework could help improve service for students through contract accountability and ensure drivers receive competitive wages, benefits and training.



We encourage your Committees to support the adequate funding for the transition to electric school buses and to utilize a “best value” procurement process as NY state starts on its economic recovery and continues to address the ongoing climate crisis. Thank you very much for your attention to this critical issue.