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VEIC Media Contact

Alayna Howard

ahoward@veic.org

802-540-7656

State of Vermont to launch electric school and transit bus pilot program

VEIC to administer two-year pilot to test feasibility of electric buses in the state

June 12, 2019 – Montpelier, VT – The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and VEIC are excited to announce the launch of an electric school and transit bus pilot program for the state of Vermont, funded by the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust (EMT). The pilot will evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of electric school and transit bus operation in the state over a two-year period.

Vermont is prioritizing the expenditure of its EMT funds to advance electric vehicle use. The pilot aims to engage partners across the state and maximize the use of available EMT funds in an effective way, while also meeting specific criteria and priorities. These include:

- Testing and evaluating the viability of electric buses in Vermont as replacements for diesel-powered buses, across a range of route conditions, geographical areas, and types of weather.
- Maximizing air quality benefits by considering the age and miles traveled for the buses that are replaced, as well as areas that are disproportionately impacted by air contaminants in the state.
- Exposing as many Vermonters from different communities, demographic profiles, and geographic regions as possible to electric bus technologies.

“We are excited to be putting the Volkswagen Settlement funds to use for Vermonters,” said Emily Boedecker, DEC Commissioner. “We aim to create positive change in communities across Vermont by improving air quality, reducing harmful emissions, and making electric bus technology accessible to more people.”

VEIC was selected by DEC to administer the pilot program. VEIC has successfully designed, implemented, and evaluated multiple electric school and transit bus programs in New England, and specializes in electric vehicle deployment across cold-weather, rural areas.

The pilot will roll out in three phases, beginning with the selection of at least two schools and one transit agency to participate in the deployment of electric buses in their communities. Following a careful planning process to establish travel routes, choose vehicle models, and acquire the necessary charging infrastructure, the buses and equipment will be tracked and evaluated for a full year. Throughout this year of operation VEIC will provide technical assistance to the participating schools and transit provider(s), while also evaluating and reporting on the performance of the vehicles. To ensure school districts are aware of the program and have support to apply, VEIC is partnering with the Vermont Energy Education

Program (VEEP) to leverage its extensive experience engaging with Vermont's school systems for nearly 40 years.

"We are thrilled to be working with the State and partnering with VEEP to implement this electric bus pilot program in Vermont," said Jennifer Wallace-Brodeur, Director of Transportation Efficiency at VEIC. "Dedicating Volkswagen Settlement funds to advancing electric vehicle use, particularly for public transit and school transportation, is the best option for our communities and our environment. We commend Vermont for making this choice and taking steps to deploy these vehicles in a smart and effective way."

VEIC will release a request for qualifications in the coming weeks to collect information from interested, prospective schools and transit agencies. Pilot information will be posted at <https://dec.vermont.gov/air-quality/vw>. Interested school or transit agencies can also contact VEIC Consultant Stephanie Morse to learn more: smorse@veic.org.

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The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources is charged with oversight and management of Vermont's natural environment on behalf of the people of Vermont. We endeavor to draw from and build upon Vermonters' shared ethic of responsibility for our natural environment, an ethic that encompasses a sense of place, community and quality of life, and an understanding that we are an integral part of the environment, and that we must all be responsible stewards for this and future generations. anr.vermont.gov.

VEIC is a sustainable energy company with a mission to enhance the economic, environmental, and societal benefits of clean and efficient energy use for all people. Headquartered in Vermont with offices in Ohio, Washington D.C., and New York state, VEIC has over 32 years of experience transforming energy systems, specializing in energy efficiency, clean transportation, and renewable energy. In addition to its full-service consulting business, VEIC operates three large-scale energy efficiency utilities: Efficiency Vermont, Efficiency Smart, and the DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU); and launched three mission-aligned subsidiaries that promote community-level solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. www.veic.org.