



2026 STATE LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP

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Bureau of Air Management

SESSION OVERVIEW

Short Legislative Session Ran from February 4th to May 6th
~29 Bills were tracked during the session for the Air Bureau

Bureau Focus:

CHEAPR program changes, Clean School Bus Grant Changes.

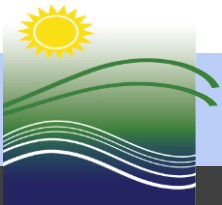
Tracked Topics:

EV Policy, Air Emission Related Bills, Permitting, Programmatic Goals, Updates to sections of Public Act 22-25 and Transportation technologies.

Bill Outcomes:

20 bills advanced out of committee

6 bills passed (some components added to other legislation)



TRACKED BILLS CONTINUED

Miscellaneous Subjects

- [S.B. No. 306](#) Economic development and comprehensive energy strategy. **Passed**
- [S.B. No. 319](#) Gas powered leaf blowers & similar lawn equipment. **Failed**
- [H.B. No. 5331](#) Air permits of certain crematories. **Passed**
- [H.B. No. 5152](#) Prevention of wildfires. **Incorporated into HB 5153**
- [S.B. No. 453](#) A climate related surcharge on certain insurance policies. **Failed**
- [H.B. No. 5039](#) Additional transparency and oversight of the distribution of certain legislatively directed funds. **Passed**

Electric Vehicle Policy

- [H.B. 5568](#)' Registration fees for electric vehicles. **Failed**
- [S.B. No. 413](#) Revising various motor vehicle statutes. **Passed**
- [H.B. No. 5153](#) Minor revisions of DEEP related statutes. **Passed**
- [S.B. No. 416](#) Transportation system modernization. **Failed**, elements passed as part of 5464 and SB 1
- [H.B. No. 5464](#) Recommendations from the Department of Transportation. **Passed**
- [H.B. No. 5470](#) Hybrid school buses. **Failed**, small element passed as part of HB 5464





Changes to the CHEAPR Program

CHEAPR RELATED BILLS

House Bill 5153:

DEEP Minor revisions bill and priority for the session. The legislation had several items from all over the Department.

Senate Bill 416:

Advocates bill. DEEP had concerns with the some of the changes considered in the bill. The bill would have implemented a statutory requirement that used EV's up to 7 model years old and with a sales price of under \$35,000 be included in the program.

Senate Bill 413:

Made minor revisions to DOT statutes regarding light electric vehicles, E-bikes & E-Scooters.



LEGISLATIVE CHANGES TO CHEAPR PROGRAM

Section 3 of House Bill 5153.

Eliminates the requirement that the rebates and vouchers be prioritized for residents of environmental justice communities at the same level as income qualified and requires the rebate or voucher amounts for income-qualified residents be at least double the standard amount. Under the bill, in consultation with the CHEAPR advisory board, the DEEP Commissioner may also prioritize granting rebates or vouchers to non-income qualified residents of EJ communities over other non-income-qualified residents.



Senate bill 413 An act revising various motor vehicle statutes.

The bill makes minor statutory changes that allow 750 watt or less motor electric bicycles to now be considered e-bikes. This may allow some additional models to be available through the e-bike program.

A stylized landscape illustration. The top right corner features a bright yellow sun. Below it is a large green area representing a hill or field, outlined with a thick dark blue border. The bottom of the image is a light blue area representing water, also outlined with a thick dark blue border. The text "Zero-Emission School Bus Changes" is centered in the green area.

Zero-Emission School Bus Changes

SCHOOL BUS BILLS & BACKGROUND

Current law (PA. 22-25) created a mandate for school districts in the state to transition their school bus fleets to zero-emission.

Districts with an EJ community must transition to 100% of buses providing transportation by 2030. All other districts by 2040.

In support of this goal DEEP is required to administer a grant program to give matching funds necessary for municipalities, school districts, and school bus operators to maximize federal funding when submitting federal grant applications for purchasing zero-emission school buses and electric vehicle charging or fueling infrastructure.

School Bus related bills:

- [H.B. No. 5153](#) Minor Revisions of DEEP related statutes.
- [S.B. No. 416](#) Transportation system Modernization.
- [H.B. No. 5464](#) Recommendations from the Department of Transportation.
- [H.B. No. 5470](#) Hybrid School buses.



DEEP'S PROPOSAL: CLEAN SCHOOL BUS GRANT CHANGES

House Bill 5153

DEEP proposed language amending the bond authorization to untether the use of the grant bond funding from federal funding now that additional federal school bus funding is unlikely to continue. The bill still requires the grant to prioritize maximizing, available federal, state, settlement, funding or financing.

Clean School Bus Supplemental Grant Program

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is pleased to announce a [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) to support Clean School Bus projects in Connecticut. This RFA makes supplemental funding available in coordination with the Connecticut Green Bank's Low Interest Financing [Request for Proposals](#). Recipients of previously awarded federal ESB grant funds are highly encouraged to apply. Applications for both programs are required to be submitted by the **extended deadline of January 10, 2025**. Please see the RFA for information regarding eligibility, terms and conditions, and ranking criteria.

Priority will be given to projects planned or proposed in Connecticut Distressed Municipalities and Federal Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities. More information on these communities is provided in the RFA.

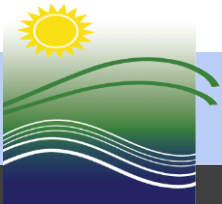
PROGRAM UPDATE:

On February 9th 2025, DEEP sent award letters to all five eligible school bus fleet owners. The cumulative maximum award for all awardees was \$5,317,000. These grant awards will serve as supplemental funding to federal EPA Clean School Bus funding awards.

These awards include:

- Autumn Transportation Serving the Hartford Public Schools District, awardee will be eligible to receive up to \$837,000.00 in supplemental state funding for the deployment of 25 battery electric buses and 25 single-port DC electric vehicle fast chargers.
- Connecticut Technical Education and Career System, will be eligible to receive up to \$40,000 per eligible bus and associated charging infrastructure submitted in the application, for a total of up to \$1,000,000. These funds will be used for the deployment of 25 electric school buses and the associated charging infrastructure, including 17 single-port DC fast chargers and 12 dual-port Level 2 chargers. The buses and chargers will serve various locations around the state.
- DATTCO Inc, serving East Hartford Public School district, will be eligible to receive up to \$80,000 for the deployment of 2 electric school buses and the associated charging infrastructure, including 2 single-port DC fast chargers.
- First Student serving the Shelton, Fairfield and West Hartford Public School districts, will be eligible to receive up to \$1,560,000 for the deployment of 39 electric school buses and the associated charging infrastructure, including 20 dual-port DC fast chargers.
- ZUM Services Inc., serving Branford Public School District, will be eligible to receive up to \$1,840,000 for the deployment of 46 electric school buses and the associated charging infrastructure, including 46 single-port DC fast chargers.

If you have any questions about the DEEP forms, please email DEEP.MobileSources@ct.gov with the subject "DEEP

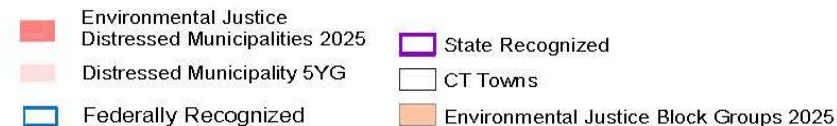
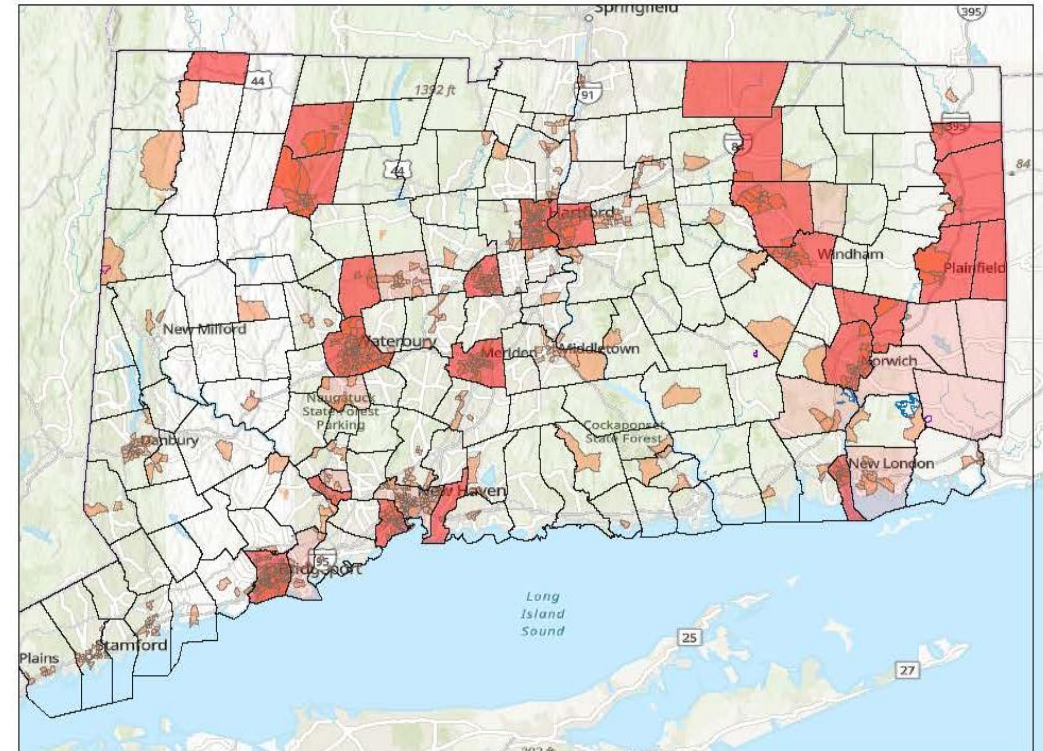


SENATE BILL 416

The bill proposed a significant altering of the Zero-emission School Bus Mandate.

- **Est. interim deadline for school buses in distressed municipalities as of July 1, 2026 at 50% zero-emission by July 1, 2035.**
- **All school districts under the bill, must also be 90% zero-emission by July 1, 2040.**
- **Requires municipalities to submit plans on how they will comply with the bill's requirements to the DEEP. Distressed municipalities must submit their plans by July 1, 2029, and all other municipalities must do so by July 1, 2035.**
- **Original Bill also required a biodiesel mandate requiring that all Diesel buses use B20 biodiesel beginning October of this year. This provision was removed.**

Environmental Justice Communities



5/11/2026,

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, US contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, CGI.

Esri, USGS | Esri, FAO, N

Senate Bill 416 did not pass but the components of the bill described were incorporated into HB 5464 which did pass and is awaiting Governor's signature.

HOUSE BILL 5470

- Bill proposed altering the Zero-emission school bus mandate. Proposal would have altered the mandate by eliminating the EJ school district requirement and instead requiring all school buses to be either zero-emission, alternative fuel, or hybrid buses by January 1, 2040, regardless of the school district's location.
- DEEP opposed this change and industry testified that hybrid technology school buses are not currently manufactured.

House Bill 5470 did not Pass.



A stylized, colorful landscape illustration. At the top right, a bright yellow sun is partially visible. Below it, a large, vibrant green hill dominates the middle ground. The hill is outlined with a thick, dark blue border. To the left, a smaller, light green hill is partially visible. At the bottom, a light blue area represents water, also outlined with a thick, dark blue border. The overall style is simple and graphic.

House Bill 5464

HOUSE BILL 5464 TRANSPORTATION OMNIBUS BILL EFFECTS WITHIN DEEP

- Bill is currently awaiting Governor's signature
- Incorporated sections from Senate Bill 416
- Alternative Fuels Working Group.
 - (DEEP) commissioner, in support of administering the law on zero-emission school bus requirements and a related grant program is required to create a working group to evaluate and make recommendations on Connecticut school bus fleets' increased use of alternative fuels and technologies, including biodiesel, propane, and electric school buses.
 - Work group incorporated as a concession to House Bill 5470 alternative fuel changes and Senate Bill 416 biodiesel provisions.



HOUSE BILL 5464 OTHER EFFECTS



In addition to the sections pertaining to ESBs. The bill incorporated DOT & DAS requested changes that alter EV requirements for the state fleet and new construction.

- Removes the prohibition on the state purchasing or leasing diesel transit buses.
- Allows for the parking of Electric Vehicles and Plug in Hybrid Electric Vehicles in State agency parking spots designated for EV charging even if the vehicle is not actively charging, at the discretion of the state agency.
- Changes EV charging station requirement for new state facilities
 - Requires that 8% of these facilities' car parking spaces are capable of supporting future charging implementation, rather than requiring that 20% of certain parking spaces be installed with level two EV charging stations.
 - Also requires certain commissioners to periodically make recommendations on revising the EV charging station requirements.

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Crematories Working Group

SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5331

DEEP also provided testimony on House Bill 5331 An Act Concerning The Air Permits of Certain Crematories

- The original bill language proposed to allow the continued operation of certain crematories while the air permit renewal application is under review by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (the Department), or while an application for an expansion of the crematory is pending.
- After amendment The bill as passed now requires (DEEP) to establish a working group to study mercury vapor emissions and other emission factors associated with crematories used for human remains.
- The work-group is required to convene in June with a final report due to the Environment Committee in January of 2027.



Wrap Up and Questions