

State Representative Carol Doherty
Remarks re: GATRA Electric Buses
November 20, 2021

Thank you for inviting me to share some thoughts on this occasion. This is a great moment for Taunton, for the 28 communities served by GATRA and the 2.6 million riders in the region. A hardy shout out to GATRA for stepping into the heart of MA effort to reach Net 0 by 2050 with 6 electric busses about to go online.

In February Governor Baker signed the \$16Billion Transportation Bond Bill that allocates resources to modernize the state's transportation system including electrification of buses. This initiative was met with a chorus of praise from the Clean Energy community.

In March our historic Climate Change legislation, the Next Generation Roadmap, was adopted which promises to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050.

Just a few short days ago the \$1.75 T Build Back Better legislation was finally adopted by Congress and signed into law by President Biden. The Infrastructure Plan includes funding to roll out electric school buses, 1000's of buses nationwide including \$7.5 Billion for charging stations.

A few days ago I reached out to Mark Sousa to congratulate GATRA for being so forward thinking. I was curious about how the 6 buses were funded. You might remember the controversy surrounding the VW claim back in 2015 that their new vehicles that year were guaranteed to provide high fuel efficiency with low level emissions. Their marketing slogan was "this 'aint you daddy's diesel, stinky, smoky sluggish car". Those claims were disputed. VW was forced to pay for their false claims in a \$14.7 billion settlement. They were also ordered to put \$2.7B into an Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund to support environmental programs.

And so we circle back to GATRA'S 6 electric buses. In that VW settlement \$75Million plus dollars came to MA. \$24M of it to this part of the state. Mark tells me that each bus cost \$867,000 fully funded by the VW settlement. These buses were conceptualized by staff with GATRA being the first to launch this type of bus. 4 buses will be deployed in Taunton with the remaining 2 within the catchment area. Partnering with the TMLP six charging stations will be located in the maintenance facility. And finally GATRA is taking its diesel buses off the road. Thank you for moving Taunton into a greener future.