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Transportation Department  
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March 29, 2018

Commissioner Jon Niermann  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
Air Quality Division  
Implementation Grants Section, MC-204  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, TX 78711-3087

Re: VW Settlement

Dear Commissioner Niermann,

The Environmental Mitigation Trust (EMT) presents Texas with the opportunity to reduce smog-forming nitrogen oxide (“NOx”) emissions and to accelerate the clean-up of older, dirtier diesel buses, especially in communities that have been disproportionately burdened by these vehicles. As the Director of Transportation for Friendswood Independent School District, I believe that replacing old, dirty school buses with new clean buses offers a cost-effective strategy to reduce NOx emissions and improve public health and is the best use of Texas’ share of the EMT funds. As a district responsible for the daily well-being of 2,800 students, we find it a priority to minimize their exposure to avoidable toxins within and around the learning environment.

The emissions technology in today’s new school buses is very close to eliminating our student’s exposure to emissions such as NOx and others that are associated with pre-2009 diesel buses, including increased asthma emergencies, bronchitis, and school absenteeism, especially among asthmatic children.<sup>1</sup> Using VW funds for a Clean School Bus Program provides a real opportunity to effectively reduce harmful emissions that are associated with cancer and thousands of premature deaths nationwide every year.

Updating our fleet with new cleaner school buses is an easy-to-integrate solution for budget-constrained school districts, and drastically improves the quality of the air which our students breathe on a daily basis.

We hope to support Texas’ continued transition to a better air quality future with the purchase and deployment of clean school buses and offer our support as the planning process moves forward. Should you have any follow-up questions, please reach out to me at the contact information below.

Sincerely,

Dean Lewis, FISD Director of Transportation

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<sup>1</sup> Adar, S. et al. “Adopting Clean Fuels and Technologies on School Buses. Pollution and Health Impacts in Children.” ATS Journals, Volume 191, Issue 12. <http://www.atsjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1164/rccm.201410-1924OC#.WA-HINUrJhE>, June 15, 2015.

