AN ACT

AMENDING SECTIONS 15-923 AND 28-3053, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)
Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Section 15-923, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

15-923. Contracts for transportation; requirement; report
A. As an alternative to maintaining and operating a transportation program or in conjunction with a transportation program, a school district may, if it is found to be economically advantageous, contract for VEHICLES AND OTHER transportation SERVICES. Contracts may be with another political subdivision, a common or contract carrier or a private party.

B. IN ORDER TO EXPEDIENTLY PROCESS CONTRACTS FOR THE PROVISION OF TRANSPORTATION, A SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY SELECT A PREAPPROVED CONTRACT CARRIER OR PRIVATE PARTY THAT MEETS BOTH OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. PROVIDES ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:
   (a) ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUSES.
   (b) ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUS CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE.
   (c) CHARGING AND CHARGING MANAGEMENT SERVICES.
   (d) ELECTRIC SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

2. HAS FILED WITH AND RECEIVED APPROVAL FROM THE SCHOOL BUS ADVISORY COUNCIL ESTABLISHED BY SECTION 28-3053.

Sec. 2. Section 28-3053, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

28-3053. School bus advisory council
A. The school bus advisory council is established consisting of nine TEN members appointed by the governor. The governor shall appoint the members as follows:

  1. One member representing the department of public safety.
2. One member representing the state board of education.
3. One member from a school district with a student count of less than six hundred.
4. One member from a school district with a student count of six hundred or more but less than three thousand.
5. One member from a school district with a student count of three thousand or more but less than ten thousand.
6. One member from a school district with a student count of ten thousand or more.
7. One member representing transportation administrators.
8. One member who is a certified school bus driver or school bus driver instructor.
9. One member representing a private sector school bus service provider.
10. ONE MEMBER WITH EXPERTISE IN ELECTRIC VEHICLE FLEETS, ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE OR CHARGING MANAGEMENT SERVICES.

B. The members shall serve staggered three-year terms unless a member vacates the position. Appointment to fill a vacancy resulting from expiration of a term is for the unexpired portion of the term only.

C. The school bus advisory council shall:
1. Meet at least annually.
2. Select a chairperson from its members.
3. Advise and assist the department of public safety in developing the rules required by sections 28-900 and 28-3228.
4. Recommend curricula for school bus driver safety and training courses required by section 28-3228.
5. Advise and consult with the department of public safety concerning matters related to the certification of school bus drivers and the safety of school buses.
6. Establish a mailing list that includes any party expressing an interest in the council's activities. The council shall provide written notice to each person on the list at least fifteen days before the date on which the meeting is to be held. The notice shall be sent by mail or electronic means to the party's last address of record with the council or by any other method reasonably calculated to effect actual notice to any party expressing interest in the council's activities. Written notice by electronic means is effective when transmitted. For other methods written notice is effective on receipt or five days after the date shown on the postmark stamped on the envelope, whichever is earlier.

7. PREAPPROVE CONTRACT CARRIERS AND PRIVATE PARTIES AS PRESCRIBED IN SECTION 15-923, SUBSECTION B.

D. Members of the school bus advisory council are not eligible to receive compensation or reimbursement for expenses.
Sec. 3. **School bus advisory council; preapprovals**

For the purposes of section 15-923, subsection B, Arizona Revised Statutes, as added by this act, and section 28-3053, subsection C, paragraph 7, as added by this act, the school bus advisory council established by section 28-3053, Arizona Revised Statutes, as amended by this act, shall finalize a process for soliciting preapprovals within six months after the effective date of this act and shall finalize an initial list of preapproved contract carriers and private parties within one year after the effective date of this act.

Sec. 4. **Legislative findings**

A. The legislature finds that the lower lifetime operating and maintenance costs of electric school buses can save schools thousands of dollars per year.

B. The legislature further finds that most school buses in use today emit diesel exhaust that contributes to air pollution and its resulting health effects on our most vulnerable communities.

C. The legislature hereby declares that there is an interest in electrifying school transportation to garner the many widespread benefits of such action, including local diesel emission reductions, reduced lifetime operating and maintenance costs for schools, and the reduction in exposure of children to diesel emissions.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR JULY 6, 2022.