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Economy

“Millions” Wasted on Electric School Buses as Maryland Pivots Back to Diesel

by **Zero Hedge**

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► Implementing electric buses “led to millions of dollars in wasteful spending,” IG report finds

Image Credit: Chris Jackson for The Washington Post via Getty Images

A school district in Maryland is finding out just how costly virtue signaling can wind up being.

Maryland’s largest school district in Montgomery County found out via an Inspector General’s report that implementing electric buses “led to millions of dollars in wasteful spending”, according to [WTOP](#).

The wasteful spending was caused in part by late deliveries and maintenance issues, according to the IG report.

The [report](#) said that at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in October 2022, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) announced that its 326 new electric buses would save 6,500 gallons of fuel daily and cut costs by 50%.

And then reality set in. Since entering into a \$168 million contract for the buses, MCPS has faced significant delays, [WTOP](#) reports.

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The county's Office of the Inspector General reported that the buses were consistently delivered late. Dozens of buses scheduled for fiscal year 2022 arrived only after Christmas, instead of at the start of the school year as required.

"MCPS's failure to hold the contractor accountable to the terms of the contract and their decision not to include provisions to offset incurred expenses has led to millions of dollars in wasteful spending," the IG report said.

A similar issue occurred in fiscal year 2024. Of the 120 buses slated for delivery, only 37 arrived by the end of September, 69 between October and December, and 14 more between January and April.

The report also highlighted mechanical and charging failures, which rendered many buses inoperable for extended periods. From February 2022 to March 2024, buses failed to complete routes 280 times, with repairs taking an average of 13 days, and more than half exceeding five working days, according to WTOP.

Consequently, in October 2023, the school board approved the purchase of 90 diesel buses for over \$14.7 million to address the shortfall.

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