

HB 2849 -- SCHOOL BUSES

SPONSOR: Ealy

This bill enacts provisions relating to contracts for zero-emission school buses. The bill specifies that a contract between a school district and a party contracting to provide transportation services to the school district is jointly renewable at the end of the contract term for a term no more than 15 years, and must include all of the terms of the previous contract and any provisions increasing rates based on increased costs. If the school district can exercise an option either to purchase the buses or cancel the lease at the end of each annual period during the contract, the contract may be made for a term not more than 20 years.

The bill allows for a contract to be negotiated annually within the contract period when economic factors indicate negotiation is necessary to maintain an equitable pricing structure. Renegotiation is subject to the approval of both contracting parties. Any rental, lease, or lease-purchase of a school bus must comply with Chapter 177, RSMo.

The bill also requires that, beginning January 1, 2037, 100% of all newly purchased or contracted school buses must be zero-emission vehicles, where feasible. If a school district determines that the purchase or lease of a zero-emission school bus is not feasible due to both terrain and route constraints, it may request a one-time extension for a term not to exceed five years. The school district must reasonably demonstrate that a daily planned bus route for transporting pupils to and from school cannot be serviced through available zero-emission technology, and the Department of Natural Resources, consulting with the Missouri Air Conservation Commission, will determine whether to grant a one-time extension.

Beginning January 1, 2042, if a school district with an average daily attendance of 350 or less still determines that the purchase or lease of a zero-emission school bus is not feasible, the school district may request annual extensions with the last extension expiring on January 1, 2047. The same requirements apply to these one year extensions.

This bill is similar to HB 101 (2025).