

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | BUSES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

APS on right track switching to electric

MY FAMILY and I live in the San Jose neighborhood of Albuquerque, where we have some of the worst ozone pollution in the city. My children attend APS, where the school district transportation department serves more than 29,000 students. Our buses travel an average of more than 27,000 miles a day and mostly run on diesel fuel. However, diesel pollutes. It pollutes the air our children breathe, it can increase asthma attacks, and it has been found to cause heart damage, among other serious health issues.

In contrast, electric buses would provide our children with a clean ride to school. A ride free of the dirty air caused by diesel fumes.

Last fall the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law created the EPA's Clean School Bus Program, which allocated \$5 billion over five years to support school districts in acquiring low- or zero-emission school buses. As a parent, I want to see New Mexico schools take full and immediate advantage of this funding and get electric school buses rolling through neighborhoods like mine.

I was glad to hear APS took advantage of this opportunity,

applying for 20 electric school buses. I am very grateful to everyone at APS who was part of this process, as well as our elected officials who voted for this bill. I hope we see more electric school buses in Albuquerque and across the state as we work together to reduce the air pollution impacting our beloved communities and prioritize clean air and good health for all families.

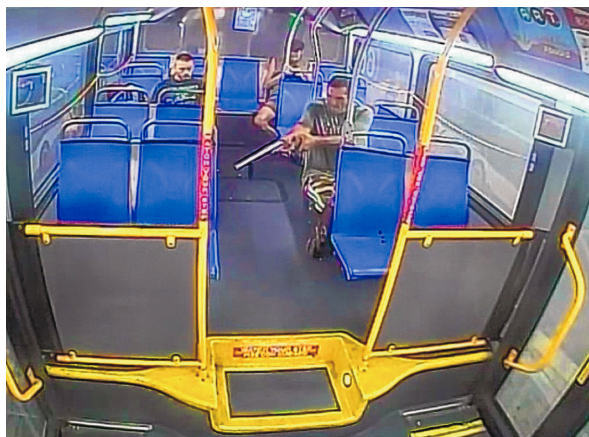
ANA RIOS
Albuquerque

I used to love it but wouldn't ride now

POLICE GET access to live video from city buses. When I read articles like this, it is no wonder bus ridership is low. Who wants to ride a bus?

Years ago, when I was going to UNM and my son to Emmanuel Lutheran Elementary, we rode the bus from the parking lot at Osuna and Louisiana and back again in the evening.

It made so much sense. I got off at the Frontier Restaurant and he rode to Arno and Central and walked to school. We changed buses at Central and Louisiana. I asked him about rowdy bus passengers. He didn't seem fazed by them. He had a great bus driver. Some days he rode alone.



COURTESY PHOTO

Security video from an Albuquerque Rapid Transit bus shows a man pulling out a gun and firing it into the door of the bus Aug. 6 as the bus drove down Central.

My son thinks riding the bus was great. It gave him a sense of autonomy. Bus ridership also helped him learn to solve his own problems.

Think on this: In today's Albuquerque, would you allow your child to ride the bus? Would you ride the bus? My answer is no. Safety is our main concern. I dare say the city has lost control.

Notice I did not say the police have lost control. I said the city has lost control. We, as citizens of Albuquerque, have lost so much. This article is just one

of the many that indicate how much we have lost. By the way, putting a chip in your child's arm isn't an option — but voting is.

CAROL BELL
Albuquerque

Caution needed in discussion of ART

A September "Road Warrior" column ("Bus stop scariest fair ride") told the story

of an individual who had an unfortunate experience taking ART home from the State Fair. The bus was late and the person feared he may get "knifed, shot, (or) robbed."

As a regular public transit rider, stories like this upset me for a couple of reasons. First, it reminds me of the real safety issues that we have on our buses. The second is because no one has been ever been shot or stabbed on an ART bus or platform (based on my research) but the impression the media deliver is that it's all but a guarantee it will happen to you.

... Transit users have to worry that if public perception of our buses gets bad then people may call for funding cuts that lead to our routes being reduced or removed entirely.

It's imperative we talk about safety; people are rightfully concerned. But we also need to remind folks about the development that ART has spurred along Central, the car trips it has replaced saving pollution and carbon emissions, and all the folks who can navigate our city more easily because of it. As a driving city, we can leave out some of the nuance when we talk about driving. Transit users don't get that luxury.

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