

New York City should consider biogas buses



March 5, 2018. In a letter to the editor published in Crain's New York Business, Energy Vision Founder Joanna D. Underwood argues that New York City could meet its goal of cutting greenhouse gases 80% by 2050 by switching to biogas buses.

The letter ensures that Align, the alliance of New York community and labor organizations, is right to call climate change one of the most urgent threats facing New Yorkers and to flag the need for the new City Council speaker to address it. “The city needs to take action not only in the building sector but in the transportation sector, which is the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in the U.S. and accounts for 25% of the city’s.”

According to Underwood, buses and heavy-duty trucks are critical factors in those emissions. Align suggests electrifying the city’s bus fleet, but there’s another worthy option: converting it to run on biogas—specifically, renewable natural gas fuel made from organic waste.

Energy Vision founder says that a study just found that the RNG option is as low-emission as electric vehicles (on a life-cycle emissions basis), and it’s about half the cost. About 20,000 buses and refuse trucks in the U.S. have already converted to RNG. L.A. Metro has purchased 295 RNG buses and may decide to convert its entire fleet of 2,200.

The 5,600 heavy-duty trucks in New York City’s fleet consume more than 17 million gallons of diesel annually. “We could shift them to cleaner, quieter RNG models, helping to meet the city’s goal of cutting greenhouse gases 80% by 2050.”