

We're calling on Lion to sign a community benefits agreement.

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Hi Lauren,

On a hot Friday in Joliet, IL, Lion Electric officially opened. It's the latest global company to set up shop in an industrial park that also includes Amazon and Whirlpool facilities. Shiny, new electric school buses were parked inside and outside the new building.

The excitement was in the air. Speakers talked about how Lion's opening was proof that Illinois is the country's next electric vehicle hub. The company says it will bring [1,400 jobs](#) in assembling electric school buses and other heavy-duty vehicles to town.

But one thing was missing in the excitement: Details about the *quality* of these jobs.



JMA's Illinois team and our partners Warehouse Workers for Justice and United Auto Workers attended the grand opening event to call on Lion to negotiate a community benefits agreement (CBA) with our growing coalition in Joliet.

Unfortunately, we can't assume that even cutting-edge companies [will create good jobs](#). A [CBA](#) would mean that Lion would commit to directly hiring from marginalized groups, paying family-sustaining wages, providing meaningful training, and allowing workers the freedom to organize.

Our CBA with New Flyer is already [making a difference](#) in Anniston, AL, and participants are still graduating from the [EV training program](#) established at BYD as a result of our CBA with them. **CBAs are a win-win: companies get a pipeline of skilled workers, and communities get good jobs and better career opportunities.**

Things are moving in a good direction in the electric school bus world, but Lion is lagging behind. Workers at ESB manufacturer Blue Bird recently won [union recognition](#) at their plant in Georgia, so now Lion is the only major non-union manufacturer of standard-size (Type C) school buses.

Lion stands to receive over [\\$85 million](#) in public funding. Shouldn't we expect more of a company benefiting from our money?

The time is now to set the standards for the growing EV bus industry. Companies receiving public money must do public good for our communities.

In solidarity,



Andre Steele
Illinois Lead Organizer

What We're Reading and Watching

- JMA National Research and Policy Manager Ian Elder wrote about what's happened in the electric school bus world since releasing his report, ["Driving the Future."](#) **"As the U.S. begins to rapidly switch over its 500,000-strong school bus fleet to all-electric, we're excited to keep organizing for a transition with workers and communities in the driver's seat."** Read the blog [here](#).
- Earlier this month, the Department of Labor signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of the Interior. JMA and our allies have been advocating for these agreements, which will help ensure that **the billions of dollars the government is investing in electric school buses, water technology, and other clean tech will also create high-paying, family-sustaining union jobs.** Read more about the MOU [here](#).

Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.

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