



AIA
Maryland

Promoting Maryland Architecture Since 1965

22 January, 2020

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Appropriations Committee Chair
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for HB1
Built to Learn act of 2020

Dear Delegate McIntosh, and Members of the Appropriations Committee;

With the implementation of House Bill 1, Maryland is poised to make another significant capital investment in public school construction and renovation. AIA Maryland supports this investment as the need for new and renovated schools has grown, and the average age of Maryland public schools is nearly 30 years old. We also urge the adoption of this proposed amendment that revert us to a studied, responsible path for sustainable performance of state funded schools. Research has clearly shown that where we learn impacts learning outcomes and it is in the state's interest to have a positive influence on this matter. AIA Maryland represents over 2,000 architects in the state of Maryland and as design professionals we are passionate about providing quality learning environments for our residents and we want to remind you that 1 in 6 of our Maryland residents step foot in a school every day.

In 2008, Maryland passed a High Performance Building Bill requiring state funded buildings to meet a rating of LEED Silver or higher. This has been in place for over 10 years and has moved Maryland to one of the top 10 states in the country to have more LEED certified projects that provide healthier, more efficient buildings in which to learn. Maryland now ranks the 6 highest state in the country for LEED certified projects. Over time, the Maryland Green Building Council recognized that other paths provide comparable benefits and they have taken measures to enable alternate paths as equal, including Green Globes and the International Green Construction Code. The core requirements of each path however have specific categories of requirements including site, water, energy, materials and health, to enable a comparable performance.

Two years ago the 21st Century Schools Act had a small clause that required the Maryland Green Building Council to establish Green School Guidelines without third party certification. This bill failed to acknowledge that the Council has already provided a path as an option for schools following the IGCC. Additionally, the language simply states that a professional can simply sign the documents, suggesting the project is compliant, without requiring documentation or a means to validate the effort to achieve a sustainable rating. Simply stated, this Act requires little accountability of the team to document efforts that will impact a building and its occupants for well more than 50 years of service.

AIA Maryland cares deeply about the quality of Maryland's built environment, particularly space that houses our future generations. It's important that we plan well and support healthy, efficient schools that are exciting places to learn. We therefore respectfully ask your committee to accept a suggested amendment to HB 001 that provides thoughtful, responsible paths to sustainable design as it was originally considered and enabled by the Maryland Green Building Council in 2014.

Sincerely

Chris Parts, AIA
Past President, AIA Maryland

cc: Appropriations Committee:

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