

February 27, 2020

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
121 House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Opposition of House Bill 665 (Public School Construction and State Buildings - Use of Geothermal Energy)**

Dear Chairwoman McIntosh:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 100,000 employees of the building industry across the State of Maryland, opposes House Bill 665 (Public School Construction and State Buildings - Use of Geothermal Energy).

This bill requires that geothermal energy systems be installed in newly constructed public schools and in newly constructed State buildings, including any buildings for which more than 50% of the construction cost is paid using State funds. It also requires that life-cycle analyses of projected construction projects required under current law be based on a 50-year period and incorporate the use of geothermal energy systems.

While we appreciate the intent to encourage new construction that is sensitive to climate change, this is an expensive and overreaching measure. Geothermal energy is likely already used for projects when it is favorable, which is good; but requiring them for all projects, even when it may not be favorable, will unnecessarily increase construction and utility costs for the State. Project costs for local school construction projects likely increase. Local jurisdictions already lack the funding to construct and maintain public schools, and will likely struggle to pay for these systems; at a time when the State is considering some very expensive initiatives, requiring new and expensive systems is fiscally irresponsible and likely infeasible.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or [lgraf@marylandbuilders.org](mailto:lgraf@marylandbuilders.org).

cc: House Appropriations Committee Members