



HB1295 PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION – SCHOOL DISTRICT ENERGY USE – POLICY AND STUDY

March 10, 2020

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1295 Public School Construction – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study**. This bill prohibits, beginning July 1, 2021, the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) from approving a public school construction project for a local school system that has not adopted or updated a specified school district energy policy. The IAC must coordinate with the Maryland Energy Administration and the Maryland Clean Energy Center to study and make recommendations on expanding and providing additional funding for the Maryland Net-Zero Energy School Initiative Grant Program.

AACPS opposes unfunded mandates and changes to State law that increase school system's business expenses related to school construction. The provisions in HB1295 have little or nothing to do with public school construction funding and conjoining the two issues appears to make limited public policy sense and could be punitive in nature. HB1295 is also an unfunded mandate in a couple of ways. First, there is a cost associated with staff time to acquire, track, and report the various data elements contained in the bill. Second, and even more significant, this bill could have a detrimental fiscal impact of \$30-\$35 million in State public school construction funding AACPS receives from the IAC. This funding could be placed in jeopardy in the event that AACPS does not fully satisfy the provisions in the legislation. The IAC should not have the ability to usurp local control or local prioritization.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1295.