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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1428 – Higher Education Facilities – Mold Hazards & Mold or Moisture Problems

Good afternoon Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Jackson, and my esteemed colleagues.

Thank you for allowing me to present my bill, HB 1428, to you today.

Sadly, you may recall the mold crisis that hit College Park over a year ago. Students, professors, and staff were sickened, and – as has been well documented – a student died. The *Washington Post* exposed the failure of UMCP and the University System in dealing with the crisis.

Housekeepers at College Park were the first responders, asked to clean the mold without training, proper protective gear, or cleansers. I've met with union representatives at College Park – they shared with me stories of the work that was done – and not done – to address a situation that has become chronic and has brought real life consequences for the lack of an overall strategy for mold mitigation and remediation.

The legislation before you looks to bring order and accountability to what is now an uneven and broadly disparate response to the mold crisis impacting our higher education institutions. Without guidance, reporting requirements, and accountability, we are putting Maryland's higher education students, faculty, and staff at risk of chronic respiratory ailments, weakened immune systems, and ultimately increased medical costs.

While the situation at College Park has garnered the most attention in the media and to the public, unfortunately mold has been an issue at campuses including UMBC, Morgan State University, and others. Just as this is a problem across the USM, our legislation applies across the state to all public and private universities alike.

HB 1428 will require the Department of Health, in consultation with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), the Department of General Services, and Maryland Occupational Safety and Health to develop regulations to require periodic inspection for the presence of mold hazards, mold, or moisture problems in public and nonpublic higher education facilities in Maryland.

To develop the regulations, the Department of Health will review the inspection processes, protocols, and efforts currently utilized by institutions of higher education to address mold or moisture problems.

The regulations will:

1. Establish exposure limits for indoor concentrations of mold or mold spores to protect public health and safety;
2. Establish procedures for inspecting, identifying, and evaluating the interior of school buildings for mold hazards, mold, or moisture problems that are at least as stringent as technical guidance;
3. Establish standards for mold remediation that are at least as stringent as technical guidance;
4. Prioritize inspections of buildings known to have mold hazards, mold, or moisture problems;
5. Establish the frequency of the required inspections;
6. Address best practices and cost-effective inspections;
7. Require the Department of Health to analyze the samples and information from the inspections; and
8. Require the Department of Health to develop and maintain records on inspection results and the status of remediation measures.

If a mold hazard, mold, or moisture problem is found, the results must be reported to:

1. The Department of Health; and
2. The inspected institution; and
3. Maryland Higher Education Commission; and
4. The appropriate local health department; and
5. The students attending the school; and
6. The faculty and staff members employed at the school.

We are proud of the richness of our higher education institutions' history and accomplishments. That history includes buildings and facilities that were not and are not equipped to handle the increasing moisture and humidity that our state is experiencing. Many of the buildings on our state's campuses pre-date the concept of central air conditioning and fresh air intake, something that we take for granted. These buildings become traps for moisture, in turn becoming breeding grounds for mold and mildew. And that negatively impacts the people who work and live there.

Today you will hear from health and safety experts, campus workers and students as they describe the effects of mold, and the need to seriously address this lurking menace.

I ask for a favorable report of HB 1428. Thank you.