



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 7 – Environment – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Inspections for Mold Hazards and Mold or Moisture Problems

SPONSOR: Delegate Healey

HEARING DATE: January 28, 2020

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 7 – Environment – Public and Nonpublic Schools – Inspections for Mold Hazards and Mold or Moisture Problems**, which requires the Department of the Environment to adopt regulations to require periodic inspections for the presence of mold hazards and mold or moisture problems in public or nonpublic school facilities. Mold is a well-known trigger for allergies and asthma and should be remediated in school facilities to protect the health of students and teachers.¹ However, HB 7 cannot be implemented as envisioned without adequate funding and clearly defined standards for mold hazards.

There are currently no Federal or state standards for identifying mold hazards. To ensure standardized implementation of HB 7, the bill should be amended to first require the Department of the Environment (DOE) to establish these standards. HB 7 also does not define penalties for noncompliance, which will be an important part of ensuring proper abatement.

Prince George's County is prepared to do everything within its power to protect the health of our residents. However, enforcement of HB 7 will likely be delegated to the Prince George's County Health Department's (PGCHD) Division of Environmental Health and Disease Control, which already struggles to adequately fulfil state-wide mandates with existing staff and resources. Without additional dedicated funding, PGCHD will not be able effectively carry out this mandate. We anticipate a fiscal impact of over \$380,000, including four (4) new staff members, contracts with private

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Mold: General Information - Basic Facts about Mold and Dampness*, <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm> (last visited Jan. 28, 2020).

laboratories for specimen testing, personal protective equipment and other supplies for inspectors, and staff training for mold identification and inspection.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 7 WITH AMENDMENTS** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.