

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 606 (Delegates Cardin and Morhaim)
Ways and Means

Education - Hot Water Temperature in a Public School Facility

This bill requires local boards of education to ensure that hot water dispensed from faucets, spigots, taps, and other outlets in public schools does not exceed a temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The bill does not apply to school cafeterias or other food processing areas in public schools.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill is directed at local school systems.

Local Effect: To the extent that reducing hot water temperatures in some public schools would reduce energy costs, utilities expenditures for local school systems could decrease. Local school systems could ensure compliance with a 120-degree hot water limit with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: There is no statewide standard for hot water temperatures in public schools, although some school systems have local policies and practices.

Background: According to information gathered by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) from a variety of sources, a number of school systems set maximum temperature levels for water that may come in contact with students' hands. One school system that was surveyed uses a maximum water temperature of 110 degrees, and another

uses 110 degrees for elementary schools and 140 degrees for secondary schools. MSDE notes that, according to one engineer, a good standard for public schools would be 140 degrees for a kitchen, 95 degrees in kindergarten and prekindergarten classrooms, and 110 degrees elsewhere in schools. Higher temperatures in food preparation areas are required to ensure that certain bacteria are killed.

Local Expenditures: Reducing hot water temperatures may lower energy costs in schools where temperatures are set at high levels. In fiscal 2005, Maryland's school systems spent \$130.8 million on energy services. Any savings that could be realized by reducing hot water temperatures in schools cannot be reliably estimated.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 2, 2007
mll/rhh

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