



## HB665 PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND STATE BUILDINGS - USE OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

### OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB665 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.

Changes to State law that increase school system's business expenses related to school construction. Geothermal energy systems are already analyzed as part of all major public school construction projects for viability and feasibility under existing IAC and Department of General Services administrative procedure requirements. If geothermal energy is the most economically advantageous and is viable/feasible based upon existing site conditions, AACPS installs geothermal energy systems. If, however, it is not economically advantageous or not viable/feasible given existing site conditions, AACPS will select a more appropriate heating and cooling system. HB665 would mandate the use of geothermal energy systems even when it is not economically advantageous, or worse yet, even when it is not viable/feasible based upon the existing site conditions. At best, HB665 would result in increased initial and ongoing operating expenditures for heating and cooling. At worst, HB665 would stop a school from being approved, funded, and built upon a site where a geothermal energy system is not viable/feasible.

It is difficult to quantify the fiscal impact, but this legislation could easily add millions to the cost of public school construction costs and operating costs for AACPS. An even greater cost would come via the loss of millions of State public school construction dollars at sites where a geothermal energy system is not viable/feasible. As a result, this bill is a major unfunded mandate.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB665.