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Patrick Moran - President

Testimony
HB 1428 – Environment - Higher Education Facilities - Mold Hazards and Mold or
Moisture Problems
Appropriations
March 10, 2020
Support

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you in support of HB 1428.

This legislation mandates regular inspections, protocols, remedial measures, notification requirements, systems to receive public input and systems to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty and staff in higher education buildings.

I have worked at UMBC for over five years in Residential Life Facilities, but spent nearly 30 years working for Goucher College, Bayview Medical Center, Sinai Hospital, Union Hospital and university of Maryland Medical Center. I have encountered mold issues at all these institutions but was never trained in mold remediation procedures until my work at UMBC. That is thanks in most part to the efforts of Assistant Director Frank Caldwell, UMBC Safety Director Mike Pound and Residential Life Safety Coordinator Mat Wood. They did the research and set up a thorough remediation education program. The result was that a crew from ABM that was trained and certified in mold abatement and a mold inspection that utilizes the six facilities mechanics, housekeeping, the 15 student maintenance assistants, ABM supervisors, the Community Directors and graduate assistants.

UMBC experiences much of the same issues of mold growth due to periods of shutdown poor building techniques and global climate change along with backed-up HVAC condensate drains, leaking plumbing fixtures, lack of thorough air changes and faulty/under-sized exhaust fans in bathrooms. When I initially started work at UMBC there was a pervasive lack of knowledge and training about mold issues and remediation and leaking and backed-up drains that would often lead to frequent displacement of students and a lot of misinformation. For example, telling staff to use bleach to kill mold which does not kill mold. But with smart leadership starting with “I do not know what do to” they committed themselves to solving the problems as much as possible, including regular rounds, prompt inspections and procedures. They have conditioned

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crawl spaces, provided de-humidifiers as a temporary stop-gap until permanent repairs can be accomplished.

I am not naive. I know that our Residential Life Facilities are is very well funded and UMBC is better funded than a lot of our sister universities in the US. This has enabled UMBC to move forward at a greater pace than less-funded universities. I have heard the horror stories about unprotected staff being sent in to do mold remediation with the proper protective gear chemicals.

I know that passing of HB 1048 will advance the regulation of standards and procedures as it regards this important safety issue.

Thanks again and please know that we appreciate your consideration of supporting this legislation that will advance the regulation of standards and procedures regarding this important safety issue for thousands of students, faculty and staff.

Jim Kidwell

UMBC

Residential Facilities