



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mary Beth Tung, Director

TO: Members, House Appropriations Committee
FROM: Mary Beth Tung – Director, MEA
SUBJECT: HB0630 - Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study
DATE: February 17, 2021

MEA POSITION: Letter of Information

House Bill 630 raises several issues of which the committee should be aware.

The Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC) does not have the necessary staff (staff with design, energy, or economic expertise) to contribute to the study of Net Zero Schools. MCEC was established with a statutory mandate to become a self-sufficient green bank-like entity. Currently, their staff does not support that statutory purpose, and unnecessarily broadening its purpose may further hinder that progress, especially where it is ill-equipped to do so. Additionally, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) is already in the process of evaluating MEA's three (3) previous Net Zero Schools projects. The inclusion of MCEC serves no legitimate purpose.

The bill is focused at the district level. To be able to make improvements that would likely decrease energy usage, it may be necessary to do so at the individual school level. The bill also focuses on renewables. However, the most actionable piece of data would likely be energy usage per square foot at an individual school. As energy efficiency is typically significantly less expensive than the installation of renewables, this would then give school systems an idea of what school(s) may benefit from improvements that would improve energy usage in the most cost effective manner.

MEA encourages the committee to consider this information prior to rendering its report on House Bill 630.