

My name is Christine Wilkin, I am a teacher at Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, MD. My school was built in 1976 and designed largely without windows. Currently, the HVAC system is our only means of ventilation.

Prince George's County Public School's have purchased MERV-13 filters and conducted air quality tests with the CARES grant they received in January. The staff at my school is very concerned about the results of the air quality test.

We are particularly curious about the air exchange rate. In order for the MERV-13 filter to work properly the air should be exchanged 7 times per hour in a room. Additionally, there should be 20 minutes between class transitions to allow for the filter to exchange the air with the air from the outside.

My school operates on a 8 period schedule with students transitioning freely between classes across the school every forty five minutes.

The staff at Eleanor Roosevelt School have yet to receive reassurance that we have proper ventilation in the building.

Air purifiers were ordered by the county with the second round of stimulus in March but the order is backlogged and we have no idea when we will receive this necessary mitigation measure.

Prince George's county is in the red zone. We are not even supposed to be open. We are open on the basis that the schools are mitigating the risks. But from the ground level, I can tell you, based on my school going over the MSEA health and safety checklist, the current conditions at my school violate CDC mitigation measures.

Only 30% of students are returning to Prince George's County Public Schools, many families also share the sentiment that it is too soon to reopen and have chosen to keep their children home. But teachers did not have that choice. Teachers would lose their teaching certificate and not be able to come back to the school system for three years if we resigned. Every teacher in Prince George's County Public Schools was forced to go back to the classroom. This has created a hostile work environment.

Teachers are terrified of going to work, getting sick, or bringing the disease home to their family. Or worse, they are terrified of bringing the disease to work and getting their whole class sick. By forcing us to open and not taking the time to actually stress school safety the entire community is at risk. I have been to too many preventable funerals this past year to not support house bill 1322.

If we do not pass house bill 1322 soon, more people will die. My fear is that we do not pass house bill 1322 quickly enough and with enough support that Governor Hogan can not refuse to sign.