

HB630_FAV_EnvMDandPIRG (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Breimann, Kate

Position: FAV



HB 630 - Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

March 25, 2021

Position: Favorable

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Environment Maryland and Maryland PIRG are excited to support HB 630 to create better tracking and plans for school energy use. Doing so should help increase energy efficiency, promote clean energy, and reduce our reliance on polluting fossil fuels.

Every day, it becomes even more clear that the impacts of global warming are accelerating. 2019 was hotter than any previous year in human history, breaking records last set in 2018 and 2017. We're feeling the effects – from severe flooding across the state and more frequent red-ozone days, to increasingly powerful storms and droughts throughout Maryland, the US and the world.

Maryland's reliance on polluting fuels puts our health and safety at risk. Our state and public institutions' energy policies must conserve more energy, use the energy we have wisely and efficiently, and rely only on sources of energy that are clean, renewable and tread lightly on our planet.

It's time to achieve our climate goals

Maryland continues to work towards bold climate goals - this session alone, there are many bills that hope to mitigate the climate crisis and set us on a better path to reducing our emissions, increasing renewable energy capacity, decreasing our reliance on petrochemical products like plastic and transitioning our transportation sector away from fossil fuels.

We can't do any of this without a clear understanding of the problem. We can't achieve our climate goals without a plan of action, and a big part of creating that plan is having as much information as possible. HB 630 will give us the information we need to help schools set renewable energy targets *and* actually achieve them. It will also provide critical information to help schools meaningfully reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Protect our planet for generations to come

School districts are huge consumers of energy. Reducing the carbon footprint of our school districts would be a win for the planet certainly, but it would also be a step in the right direction to protecting public health. From asthma to heatstroke, climate change is making us sick, our kids in particular. In 2015, asthma was [the top reason](#) that students missed school - and we know that our reliance on fossil fuels leads to rampant air pollution that contributes to Maryland having some of the highest asthma rates in the country.

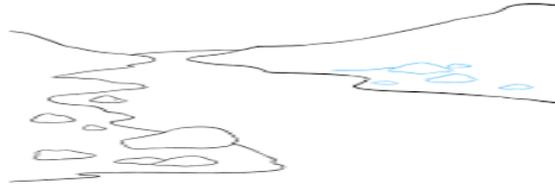
Today's students are tomorrow's leaders and they deserve to attend institutions that are working to protect the planet for their future. Youth activists are speaking up in increasingly large numbers about the climate crisis, and are demanding change. This bill is an absolutely critical first step to making that change, and to showing our students that we are listening to them and that we care about their future.

The lack of information and of a plan make it incredibly difficult to help transition schools to renewable energy and to reduce their overall emissions. We urge you to vote favorably because it is our duty to protect this planet for future generations.

HB630-Testimony-03-25-2021-GEHM.pdf

Uploaded by: Feldman, Elizabeth

Position: FAV



GLEN ECHO HEIGHTS MOBILIZATION

Committee: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Testimony on: (HB 630), Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use -Policy and Study (“School Clean Energy” bill)
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: March 25, 2021

Glen Echo Heights Mobilization submits this testimony in support of HB 630. We are deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change, and we want to support Montgomery County’s Climate Action Plan goals of 80% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2027 and 100% by 2035. To do so, we have focused our attention on one of the highest contributors to GHG emissions locally- Montgomery County Public Schools.

MCPS has an existing energy policy, most recently updated in 1997, but this policy currently lacks tangible goals and benchmarks for reducing GHG emissions, maximizing energy efficiency, promoting the use of clean energy, and protecting the health of students and employees.

To gain some perspective, we conducted a state-wide inventory of school district energy policies across the 24 counties in Maryland. In doing so, we learned that:

- **School districts are commonly the largest energy consumers in counties across Maryland** – larger than county governments. This means that they are also among the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions from the heating and cooling on their numerous buildings to the fossil fuels for the fleet of their school buses.
- **Most (but not all) school districts have energy policies, but these are often outdated.** Some date back to the 1970s, others to the early 2000s. Many such energy policies consist of a simple statement such as: “The Board of Education believes it to be our responsibility to ensure that every effort is made to conserve energy and natural resources while exercising sound financial management.” With one exception, the Baltimore City Schools Sustainability Plan, none of the school districts have targets for shifting to renewable energy sources or reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Moreover, even in counties where the county government has adopted targets for renewable energy or greenhouse gas emissions reductions, the school districts are exempt from such targets.** Given that school districts own the properties for their school buildings autonomously from county governments, they are typically exempt from such county policies.

HB 630 Senate written testimony (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Groutt, John

Position: FAV

HB 630 Primary and Secondary Education—School District Energy Use – Policy and Study

Submitted to: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Submitted by: John Groutt, Salisbury, Maryland, on behalf of the **Wicomico Environmental Trust**
jwgroutt@hotmail.com

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee:

Environmental benefits: I hardly need to remind you that we face an existential threat to the planet with rising temperatures and all that brings with it. Here on the Eastern Shore we are the third most impacted area of the country for sea level rise resulting from the heating of the planet, augmented by land subsidence. In Salisbury we regularly see “sunny day flooding” on streets, resulting from sea level rise. Increasingly, once bountiful farms and forests of Somerset and Dorchester counties become permanently unproductive because of saltwater pouring up ditches originally dug to drain the areas. Now the higher water levels bring saltwater up those ditches into once productive fields and forests. The Romans once spread salt on the lands of people they conquered to destroy their food supplies and livelihoods. In our case, our choice of fossil fuels is bringing the killing salt, resulting in the destruction of fertile land once producing food and timber, both important industries on the Shore.

Educational benefits: Schools are crucial for helping form the attitudes of our children and their parents. In this case schools will be demonstrating by example that we can indeed act to counter the threat.

Financial benefits: I have spoken with school officials in Wicomico County, and they perceive no problems or unusual costs to implement the proposed law. Indeed they already are using some practices beyond those called for in the Bill. A few years ago they placed solar panels on school properties and significantly cut costs. Wicomico already tracks the data required by HB 630 using a *free EPA App*, “Portfolio Manager.” The BOE uses the tracked data to guide its energy use, prioritize and address the most cost saving areas, and as a result can document saving hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. The savings more than pay for the monitoring.

Thus, HB 630 addresses environmental issues but can also bring major financial benefits associated with running large facilities that school districts must manage.

Members of the Wicomico Environmental Trust urge you to approve this Bill which offers a modest move forward to ensure that our children and future generations will live in a healthy and sustainable landscape.

Thank you.

HB630 Energy Use Policy and Study_EHE Affairs_BCPS

Uploaded by: Pi-Sunyer, Joanna

Position: FAV

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Linda Chinnia
Chair, Baltimore City Board
of School Commissioners

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
Chief Executive Officer

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Public School System
In Support of
House Bill 630 -Primary and Secondary Education
School District Energy Use
Policy and Study**

March 25, 2021

Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools) supports HB 630. Each school district in Maryland should have an energy policy to reduce costs and protect the environment. For many districts, utilities are the second-largest budget item, after salaries, and the greenhouse gases released as a result of a district's energy use are significant. A district-level policy will describe expectations, set goals, and measure progress.

Procuring more energy from renewable sources is beneficial to the environment, reduces dependency on the grid, and supports the renewable energy sector in Maryland. City Schools procures some of its electricity from an off-site solar farm, has two Net Zero Energy schools with on-site solar, and follows all state mandates regarding renewable energy. We adopted a Sustainability Policy in 2016, which includes an Administrative Regulation about Energy, Water and Resource Conservation.

Schools across the state are of varying ages with many different building systems. Some schools are highly energy efficient while others are less so. Tracking energy use helps districts to identify inefficient buildings and then reduce waste by changing behaviors and/or directing retrofits to the buildings that most need them.

An energy policy also gives districts the opportunity to educate students and staff, because though a building may be designed and constructed to be energy efficient, it may not be operated in an efficient manner. Students can learn about renewable energy, the implications of burning fossil fuels, and ways to use less energy at school and at home. They will then understand their relationship to their local, regional, and global ecosystems and the positive steps they can take.

Finally, City Schools fully support Section 2 regarding research into funding additional net zero energy schools. For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Public School System supports House Bill 630 and urges a favorable report.

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HB630_Solomon_FAV_EHE Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Solomon, Jared

Position: FAV

JARED SOLOMON
Legislative District 18
Montgomery County

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Education and Economic Development

Oversight Committee on Personnel



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Sponsor Testimony on HB 630- The School Clean Energy Act

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, Colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to present today on my legislation HB 630, the School Clean Energy Act. It's an honor to serve on this committee and to testify before you this afternoon.

As a former high school teacher and school district administrator, I believe nothing is more important than fully supporting our public schools. As the respected author and educator, Neil Postman, wrote and as often quoted by Congressman Elijah Cummings: "Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see." At the same time, we must ensure that our children and future generations will have the chance to live in a healthy and sustainable world. As climate change becomes more obvious and costly, we must focus on policies that make Maryland a leader in creating a safe, sustainable future.

My bill HB 630, the School Clean Energy Act, focuses on the intersection of these dual challenges: investing in our public schools while ensuring that school districts adopt energy policies aimed at improving energy efficiency, promoting use of renewable energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. When implemented, such policies will not just allow us to do our part to build a sustainable future, but will lead to cost savings from reduced fuel consumption, lower maintenance costs, and inexpensive onsite renewable power generation. The resulting savings can be used to fund other vital school educational priorities.

HB 630 would:

- Require school districts to adopt and then update their energy policies every two years;
- Require that school districts monitor key indicators of energy consumption, efficiency, renewable energy, and greenhouse gas emissions;
- Require school districts to report annually on these indicators using a standardized template developed by the Interagency Commission on School;

- Construction, the Department of the Environment, and the Maryland Energy Administration; and
- Encourage school districts to set targets for increasing reliance on renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

At the county level, school districts are often the largest energy consumers and emitters of greenhouse gases. To help Maryland achieve its 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emission targets, HB 630 would require the Interagency Commission to coordinate with the Energy Administration and the Clean Energy Center to study and make recommendations on how to expand and provide funding for the Maryland Net Zero Energy Schools Initiative.

We recognize that budgets for education are stretched and are wary of imposing additional financial burden on school districts. Thus, HB 630 focuses on energy policy, monitoring, reporting, and assessments without requiring significant additional budgetary outlays. By adopting more modern energy policies, including improved energy efficiency and cost-saving renewables, school districts will lower their energy costs while reducing fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions.

We reviewed the energy policies of school districts in all 23 Counties and the City of Baltimore and found that most are woefully out of date. Many were adopted in the 1990s, and some date back as far as the 1970's. Some are simple statements proclaiming a "commitment to conservation." With one exception — Baltimore City Schools — none of the school district energy policies have quantified targets for energy efficiency, use of renewable resources, or reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. While more and more county governments have been adopting policies and targets for the use of renewable energy and greenhouse gas emission reductions, it is striking that school districts are typically exempt from such policies. As some of the state's largest emitters, school districts must take the lead in addressing the climate crisis that threatens our planet.

As Maryland moves to invest in school construction in counties across the state, it is essential that school districts adopt modern energy policies. HB 630 will be a major step forward to promote more sustainable investments in our communities, our schools, and in the future of our children. Thank you.

I urge a favorable report on HB 630.

_Testimony for Clean Energy Bill(1).pdf

Uploaded by: Song, Oliver

Position: FAV

BILL: HB630
TITLE: Primary and Secondary Education -- School Energy Use -- Policy and Study
POSITION: SUPPORT
HEARING DATE: 3/25
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
SPONSOR: Delegate Solomon

Hello, my name is Oliver Song, and I am a sophomore at a local high school in Howard County. I am here today in support of the School Energy Use policy and study.

America's 17,450 K-12 school districts spend more than \$6 billion on energy every year - more than is spent on computers and textbooks combined. Sometimes up to 30 percent of a district's total energy is used inefficiently and unnecessarily. This excessive use of energy is wasteful and inefficient, and horrible for the environment.

Thus, it is crucial we begin to transition away from this usage. It has never been more imperative than now to conserve our nation's energy resources. This bill would require that schools address the purchasing, conservation, and efficiency of energy for the school, allowing flexibility in how this will happen and offering a solution to this problem.

Evidence is also growing that energy-efficient schools can boost learning environments that lead to improved student performance. Studies have shown that daylighting, which is using daylight for light, may have a positive effect on student attitudes and performance. One study by Innovative Design showed that students attending daylit schools for two or more years scored 14 percent better on tests than students in non-daylit schools. While correlation does not equal causation, most schools can make the best choice- which is to conserve energy by using natural means.

The compilation of data will also allow each school district to compare energy usage and see if their initiatives are working. It will also allow them to set goals- to slowly move towards the desired goal. Isn't that just a great situation for the environment and the students of the nation?

With so much carbon being spewed into the atmosphere, we must take action as the individuals who use this energy and curb our energy consumption. Yes, saving energy at home is great, but the real wasters are the schools that expend so much energy every single day. There is a middle school near my High school that is completely carbon neutral. It is powered by solar panels, and is the first net zero energy school in Maryland. The new and renovated school houses 49% more students and uses 50% less energy. If all Maryland schools could gradually move toward this net zero system, then the energy usage would decrease significantly- giving both students and staff a better school environment. In addition, many schools have outdated lighting and heating systems, which also wastes energy. With this bill, school districts can begin addressing these issues.

For these reasons and more, I, Oliver Song, urge a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB630

Respectfully submitted,

Oliver Song

HB0630- MCPS- FAV 032521.pdf

Uploaded by: Suskind, Danielle

Position: FAV



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

BILL: HB0630
TITLE: Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study
DATE: 3/25/2021
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: Danielle M. Susskind, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs
Danielle_M_Susskind@mcpsmd.org

The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) **supports** HB0630.

HB 630 includes three significant changes to current practice:

- The bill expands and funds the Maryland Net Zero Energy School Initiative Grant Program. This could be beneficial to MCPS. The previous program only provided funding for 3 schools, one in Howard County and two in Baltimore City.
- MCPS has an Energy Policy (Policy ECA, Energy Conservation), which we are planning to review and update over the next year. HB 630 requires targets to be established that increase renewable energy and decrease greenhouse gas emissions; current policy only requires that general conservation goals and objectives be set.
- MCPS tracks renewable energy purchased and generated, but has not reported this information to external agencies.

Regarding the remainder of HB 630, MCPS already has systems and/or other county mandates in place that effectively already comply with the content:

- During normal school operation, MCPS posts quarterly individual school energy use on the Division of Sustainability and Compliance website.
- MCPS reports annually to the County total renewable energy credits purchased per year.
- MCPS also calculates the EUI (Energy Use Index) (energy use/square foot), both as a district average as well as for each individual school. This data for individual schools goes back to 2014, and the system-wide data goes back to 1978.
- MCPS already participates in a County benchmarking program for school buildings.
- MCPS has published a Sustainability Plan, generally on a two year schedule.

For these reasons, the Board **supports** this legislation and urges a favorable report.

HB0630 for Senate - Primary and Secondary Educatio

Uploaded by: Jakuta, Joseph

Position: FWA

Committee: Appropriations

Testimony on: HB 630 - "Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use"

Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's

Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer

Position: Favorable, With Amendment

Hearing Date: March 25, 2021

Climate Parents of Prince George's supports HB 630, with amendment, "Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study."

There is a play on an old saw, the best time to start collecting data is twenty years ago, the second best time is now. Unfortunately, most Maryland school systems did not start collecting energy use data twenty years and need to start now. If we are looking back twenty years from now and our school systems did not collect energy data and have robust energy policies in place then we will have spent that time wasting energy, harming the climate, and using taxpayer funds unwisely.

Data collection on energy consumption by schools is vital. Schools systems themselves stand to benefit directly from this data collection. For instance, if a school system finds that a particular school is far more inefficient in terms of energy consumption than others, priority can be given to rebuilding or retrofitting that particular building over others so as to save the school system and taxpayers money.

Additionally, companies called Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) are becoming more sophisticated and have now developed advanced energy data collection sensor systems that can collect this data and then analyze it to prioritize energy saving measures. Partnerships with ESCOs can even lead to smart financing opportunities for school systems that need upfront monies for energy improvements. One particular school system, Hillsborough County, Florida (the 8th largest system in the nation) now saves over \$1 million dollars annually from partnering with an ESCO to reduce energy consumption. Maryland schools should be realizing these savings too.

School systems are one of the largest energy consumers in the public sector. Prince George's County alone has 208 educational facilities that are all consuming energy. The state of Maryland cannot meet its renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions goals without tackling energy consumption in schools. In order to accomplish this, school systems must set specific goals and track progress. Also, if goals are not in place there is no way for school administrators, buildings personnel, legislators, regulators, or the public at large to know if they are on track.

Requested Amendment:

It is important to amend the bill to require reporting and consideration of onsite fossil fuel consumption, not just electricity use. Energy use and electricity use are not 100% equivalent. In particular, indoor air heating systems, water heating equipment, and food preparation equipment often rely on natural gas, or oil in the case of heating. Also, schools have diesel or natural gas powered generators for back-up power. Use of this equipment results in the consumption of greenhouse gas producing energy and needs to be part of a holistic building energy plan. (B)(2)(iv) should be added to require a breakdown of building fossil fuel by type of fuel and purpose of the burning of the fossil fuel.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report WITH AMENDMENT for this important legislation.

AACPS HB630 Energy Use OPP 3.25.21.pdf

Uploaded by: Ortiz, Jeanette

Position: UNF



**HB630 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION – SCHOOL DISTRICT ENERGY USE – POLICY
AND STUDY**

March 25, 2021

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB630 Primary and Secondary Education – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study**. This bill requires each school district to adopt or update a school district energy policy beginning July 1, 2022. It specifies the contents of a school district energy policy and encourages school districts to set targets to increase the school district's use of renewable energy and reduce the school district's greenhouse gas emissions. The bill also requires that a school district energy policy be posted on the school district's website and updated every 2 years.

School districts already have comprehensive and professionalized facilities divisions that continuously monitor and deploy best practices and the most up to date codes and standards within the areas of planning, design, construction, maintenance, and school operations. Facilities divisions are sound stewards of public resources and clearly understand that their obligation is to provide for a safe and conducive learning environment while ensuring that the maximum amount of fiscal resources remains available to be allocated to the classroom. Energy procurement decisions and facilities management decisions are driven by the most cost effective and cost beneficial balance at any given moment, often even in real time. As such, any prescriptive energy policy mandate or forced choice that works counter to market forces and real time cost efficiencies is an unfunded mandate that would increase energy costs and artificially reduce the funding levels available for quality classroom instruction, employee compensation enhancements, instructional technology advancement, amongst other things.

Any unfunded mandates that would require facilities management professionals to overspend on energy acquisitions or facilities design, construction, maintenance, and school operations costs would materially detract from the overall level of funding to support both educational advancements and educational equity. While it is difficult to quantify, the fiscal impact of this legislation could be in the millions of capital dollars required annually for the construction and renovations of public schools as well as in the millions of dollars expended annually on energy commodity procurements.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB630.