

School Construction-Design Documents-Waste Disposal Infrastructure

Committee: House Appropriations

Legislation: HB 566 School Construction-Design Documents-Waste Disposal
Infrastructure

Organization: Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Position: Favorable

Hearing: February 17, 2022

Dear Committee Chair and Committee Members,

This School Construction bill HB 0566 will require the Interagency Commission on School Construction to adopt certain regulations for county boards of education to include waste disposal infrastructure in the design documents submitted to the Interagency Commission for the construction of a new school building utilizing State funding; defining "waste disposal infrastructure" as a place for the disposal of trash, recyclables, food scraps, and a sink for liquid waste; etc. Designing cafeterias to accommodate trash, recycling, food scraps, and liquid waste from the outset is the most efficient way to prepare schools for future food scrap disposal. Our faith holds that the worth and dignity of every person is paramount and HB 0566 includes our students treating foodwaste in a clean and sustainable way.

In Frederick and Montgomery counties, the Lunch out of Landfill program has been helping institute food scrap recycling in schools that were not originally designed for the centralized waste collection envisioned in HB 0566. The program relies on students to pour liquids down the sink, putting recyclables in the correct bin, food scraps to the compost bin, and trash in the trash bin. The students participating in this program are doing well with this system, as are students in other schools around the state as they create food scrap diversion programs within their schools.

The name of the game is to make it easy for students to put their waste in the right bin, and HB566 does this for newly designed cafeterias by having those cafeterias from the beginning be ready for centralized waste disposal, proper bins for trash, recycle, and food scraps, and a sink for liquids.

Please vote favorable for this important bill that will help students have a more healthful future.

Nanci Wilkinson
Environmental Justice Ministry
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church