

BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Johnette A. Richardson
Chair, Baltimore City Board
of School Commissioners

Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises
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**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
In Opposition of House Bill 365
Public School Construction – Fossil Fuel – Based Energy System Costs -Prohibition
(Green School Construction Act of 2022)**

February 8, 2022

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes the restriction that would not allow the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) from considering new or replacement fossil fuel-based energy systems as a construction or capital improvement cost.

Switching from a fossil fuel-based system to an electrical system requires additional design and infrastructure costs. For example, the existing electrical system may not support the new system, and/or the distribution system may need to be change. Existing electric meters will need to be upgraded, etc. Baltimore City Public Schools' current portfolio has about 55 buildings on fuel oil and most other on natural gas and old boiler systems. So, this additional design and infrastructure costs would apply to a large number of buildings. If such legislation passes, the State (IAC) must supplement any costs associated to this switch.

Constructing a high quality all-electric system is more expensive than a comparable fossil fuel-based system. The exact costs will depend on the buildings, but replacing a boiler is \$150,000 to \$200,000 on average. The size of boilers in our buildings are larger and may require a greater number of electrical boilers to cover the same as the existing system.

While the design and installation of VRF (Variable Refrigerant Flow) systems is competitive with fossil fuel-based systems, their operating costs are higher due to additional service calls, shorter life spans and more preventive and routine maintenance is required.

It should be noted that an all electrical system will shut down during any power outage and items such as food preparation areas will require generators, which should be an added expenditure that the State should pay for the costs.

Based on the foregoing, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposes House Bill 365 and urges an unfavorable report

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