

MARC KORMAN  
Legislative District 16  
Montgomery County

Appropriations Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Chair, Transportation and the  
Environment

Oversight Committee on Personnel



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 210  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3649 · 301-858-3649  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3649  
Marc.Korman@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Green School Construction Act of 2022 (HB 365)  
Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman—Favorable

Thank you Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee. I come before you today to discuss the Green School Construction Act of 2022 (HB 365). The legislation is all about what future long-term investments we want to make with our state taxpayer dollars. Specifically, the bill would remove the state school construction match for school systems installing fossil fuel based energy systems in new schools or when replacing the systems. Under the bill as written, school systems are free to install any type of energy system they want, when they want. But the state match would only be there for 21st century technology. Given the state of technology and our greenhouse gas reduction goals, there is no reason for state tax dollars to be used to make long-term investments in fossil fuel infrastructure when schools can instead upgrade to greener options.

As you know, the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) plan calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% from 2006 levels by 2030. To keep pace with our ambitious emissions reduction goals, we must address emissions from school buildings. Buildings are responsible for emitting forty percent of Maryland's greenhouse gasses, and 99% of Maryland schools are powered by fossil fuels. The vast majority of that is gas, a few are oil, and one school in Allegany County is actually coal fired.

As new schools are built or energy systems replaced, transitioning schools from fossil fuels to renewable energy will allow Maryland to keep pace with our climate goals. The Maryland Commission on Climate Change projects that gas delivery rates will increase more than two to five times the current rate, meaning that it is neither cost effective nor environmentally sustainable for the state to continue subsidizing fossil fuel energy use.

Maryland has been a leader in the fight against climate change, however there is still more work to be done. The Green School Construction Act will strengthen our commitment to fighting climate change by ensuring that state dollars are not used to subsidize fossil fuel infrastructure when renewable options are available. The legislation will help keep Maryland on track to meet our emission reduction goals.

That said, I recognize that there are a variety of bills about school construction that address environmental topics including the Senate's Climate Solutions Now Act and the work product of the Chair's Work Group on the Assessment and Funding of School Facilities. There are approaches that are incentives, mandates, and disincentives. We could treat new builds

differently from upgrades. We could focus on energy systems or look for net zero and net zero ready schools.

Normally, I conclude by urging a favorable report. But in this case, I want to urge favorable action not necessarily on my specific bill, but on the overall issue of how we construct our schools and invest our state taxpayer dollars for the 21st century.