

HB566: School Construction – Design Documents – Waste Disposal Infrastructure

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

March 24, 2022

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action supports HB566 to require the Interagency Commission on School Construction to adopt certain regulations for county boards of education to include waste disposal infrastructure. Designing cafeterias to accommodate trash, recycling, food scraps, and liquid waste from the onset is the most efficient way to prepare schools for future food scrap disposal.

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 HB566. 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.

Lunch out of Landfills and all of these other programs have to adapt to cafeterias that were not designed for this type of waste system - using buckets for liquids and creating their own centralized waste collection spaces. But as schools and students grapple with food scrap diversion as a critical piece of our sustainable future, HB566 clears the way so future cafeterias are designed for it.

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.

We appreciate Delegate Boyce bringing forward this legislation to efficiently streamline waste collection in cafeterias and prepare them for a more sustainable waste future.

Thank you,
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