



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street, Room 200 · Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Phone 410-841-3374 | 301-858-3374 · 800-492-7122 Ext. 3374 · Fax 410-841-3342 | 301-858-3342  
latino.caucus@house.state.md.us · www.mdlatinocaucus.org

DAVID FRASER-HIDALGO, CHAIR  
JOSELINE A. PEÑA-MELNYK, VICE-CHAIR  
GABRIEL ACEVERO, TREASURER  
JESSE T. PIPPY, SECRETARY  
MADELIN MARTINEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**SENATORS**  
MALCOLM AUGUSTINE  
PAMELA G. BEIDLE  
JILL P. CARTER  
GUY GUZZONE  
SHELLY HETTLEMAN  
CHERYL C. KAGAN  
BENJAMIN F. KRAMER  
SUSAN C. LEE  
JIM ROSAPEPE  
WILLIAM C. SMITH, JR.  
JEFF WALDSTREICHER  
MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D.  
RONALD N. YOUNG  
CRAIG J. ZUCKER

**DELEGATES**  
HEATHER BAGNALL  
BEN BARNES  
J. SANDY BARTLETT  
LISA BELCASTRO  
REGINA T. BOYCE  
AL CARR  
LORIG CHARKOUDIAN  
CHARLOTTE CRUTCHFIELD  
BONNIE CULLISON  
JESSICA FELDMARK  
DIANA M. FENNELL  
WANIKA B. FISHER, ESQ.  
LINDA FOLEY  
CATHI FORBES  
JIM GILCHRIST  
ANNE HEALEY  
SHANEKA HENSON  
TERRI L. HILL, M.D.  
JULIAN IVEY  
DANA JONES  
ARIANA KELLY  
KENNETH P. KERR, ED.D  
MARC KORMAN  
CAROL L. KRIMM  
MARY A. LEHMAN  
JAZZ LEWIS  
ROBBYN LEWIS  
BROOKE E. LIERMAN  
LESLEY J. LOPEZ  
SARA N. LOVE  
ERIC LUEDTKE  
MAGGIE MCINTOSH  
DAVID MOON  
JULIE PALAKOVICH CARR  
SHANE PENDERGRASS  
LILY QI  
PAMELA E. QUEEN  
MIKE ROGERS  
SHEILA RUTH  
EMILY SHETTY  
STEPHANIE SMITH  
JARED SOLOMON  
VAUGHN STEWART  
JEN TERRASA  
GERALDINE VALENTINO-SMITH  
ALONZO T. WASHINGTON  
MELISSA WELLS  
NICOLE A. WILLIAMS, ESQ.  
KAREN LEWIS YOUNG

TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair  
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair  
Environment and Transportation Committee Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)  
DATE: March 4, 2022  
RE: HB0686 Public Schools – Health and Safety – Carbon Dioxide  
Monitoring in Classrooms (Safe School Indoor Air Act)

### **The MLLC supports HB0686 Public Schools – Health and Safety – Carbon Dioxide Monitoring in Classrooms (Safe School Indoor Air Act)**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0686.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) studies of human exposure to air pollutants indicate that indoor levels of pollutants may be two to five times higher than outdoor levels.<sup>1</sup> Airborne viruses like COVID-19, influenza, measles, and harmful chemicals associated with building materials and cleaning agents can linger in the air of under-ventilated classrooms. The EPA study also reported that children are more susceptible to environmental exposures than adults. Children breathe more air, eat more food and drink more liquid in proportion to their body weight than adults. Therefore, air quality in schools is of particular concern.<sup>1</sup> Increased ventilation is proven to curb the transmission of airborne disease, improve students' cognitive function and test scores, decrease asthma symptoms and result in fewer missed days for students and staff.

This bill establishes the Safe School Indoor Air Program in the Maryland Department of the Environment to improve indoor air quality in public school classrooms. It will require public schools to monitor carbon dioxide levels of all classrooms at least twice a year. If a classroom has an elevated carbon dioxide reading, it will require the school to implement remediation measures to address any issues they encounter. This testing and remediation requirement will be of particular benefit to low income children who might be more prone to asthma and other chronic respiratory issues. Schools will be able to identify classrooms with the greatest need in order to prioritize actions to provide a clean and safe classroom environment for students, particularly in older, crowded schools in underserved communities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0686.

1. Environmental Protection Agency. (n.d.). *Reference Guide for Indoor Air Quality in Schools*. United States Environmental Protection Agency. Retrieved March 2, 2022, from [https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/reference-guide-indoor-air-quality-schools#IAQRG\\_Section1](https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/reference-guide-indoor-air-quality-schools#IAQRG_Section1)