

Testimony

Darryl Alexander, retired director of health and safety, American Federation of Teachers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 900. I have over 25 years of experience in addressing indoor air quality issues in schools and public buildings. This bill if enacted will deliver relief to public employees and benefits to public employers.

The research evidence is ample. We know that poor indoor air quality can have a significant impact on the health and performance of employees and occupants, (*see Indoor Air Quality Scientific Findings Resource bank. - <https://iaqscience.lbl.gov>*)- especially in densely populated institutions such as schools, long term care facilities and prisons. Workers have more health complaints and their productivity and output suffer (*see Allen et. al. <https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/10.1289/ehp.1510037>*

We know that deferred maintenance of HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) systems is associated with significantly higher energy costs (*see Fisk et. al. <https://eta-publications.lbl.gov/sites/default/files/lbnl-4889e.pdf>*). This bill will promote a systematic method for improving air quality in public buildings as well as energy efficiency. **Now is the time to act to address both issues as the State of Maryland and other public entities take advantage of historic federal funding to improve infrastructure and energy efficiency** These programs can be reasonably linked to improvements in IAQ as outlined by the US EPA and WH initiative on IAQ (*see - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/cleanindoorair/>*).

Finally we can be confident that compliance costs to public employers will be negligible by looking at the State of New Jersey experience with the 2007 IAQ standard (*see New Jersey Indoor Air Quality Standard (N.J.A.C. 12:100-13)*) – a standard more stringent than the one proposed by this bill. A review of state budgets indicated that there have been no appreciable increased costs over those sixteen years in public capital investments associated with compliance to the standard as well as no extraordinary New Jersey PEOSHA (Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Administration – certified by federal OSHA) enforcement costs. The required written plans were most likely incorporated in projected retrofit, replacement and maintenance projects and operations. PEOSHA compliance officers were able to respond to complaints as well as comprehensive workplace inspections without increasing dedicated staffing for this standard.

Please feel free to contact me for more research and policy evidence. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify.