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Spending Affordability Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight

Joint Committee on Management of
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Chair, Anne Arundel County
Senate Delegation



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SB 355

Occupational Safety and Health - Public Buildings - Indoor Air Quality

Good Afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier and Members of Finance;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 355, Occupational Safety and Health – Public Buildings – Indoor Air Quality. Our experiences with COVID-19 proved just how important of clean indoor air is. Studies show that transmission of the virus can be reduced by 80% with improved indoor ventilation and air filtration¹. Cleaner and healthier indoor air not only reduces the spread of COVID-19 and other airborne viruses, but it has also been proven to improve cognition and productivity, protects against outdoor air pollutants such as smog, and decreases the number of environmental triggers for conditions like asthma and allergies².

SB 355 requires that on or before October 31, 2025, the Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MOSH) promulgate a comprehensive indoor air quality (IAQ) standard that applies to all public employers who employ individuals that are required to work in public buildings.

Also, modeling the best practices in occupational safety and health, SB 355 allows employees and their exclusive bargaining representatives to collaborate and engage with their employers during an annual assessment of the building's envelopes and enclosures, ventilation and systems, and their operation and maintenance. SB 355 requires a process for tracking and logging employee complaints of signs or symptoms from building-related illnesses.

Finally, SB 355 promotes collaboration among all relevant stakeholders by establishing a technical advisory committee composed of experts and exclusive bargaining representatives that make recommendations on the comprehensive IAQ standard, and cost-effective solutions to bring public buildings into compliance, and other appropriate health standards and guidance.

¹ Fondazione David Hume, "Data Analysis: Controlled Mechanical Ventilation (CMV) works," March 25, 2022, available at <https://www.fondazionehume.it/data-analysis/controlled-mechanical-ventilation-cmv-works/>.

² <https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/reference-guide-indoor-air-quality-schools>

Our citizens utilize our public buildings daily - at the MVA, our public schools, courthouses, universities, even when they come here to testify. Hundreds of thousands of workers call our public buildings their worksite every day. We would never tolerate the serving of spoiled food in our public buildings, we shouldn't tolerate the breathing of contaminated air.

SB 355 takes a measured and practical approach to improving indoor air quality in public buildings. By utilizing the occupational safety and health model, we ensure that every public employer has a plan to maintain healthful indoor air quality for the public and its workers. Upon enactment, Maryland would join New Jersey and California as states that currently have IAQ regulatory standards³. Let's be a leader on indoor air quality in our public settings.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 355.

³ Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Dep't of Labor, *Indoor Air Quality*, retrieved from <https://www.osha.gov/indoor-air-quality> (last accessed 1/17/2023)