Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Testimony on: HB 614 - "School Building Energy Usage - Monthly Report"
Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's
Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer
Position: Unfavorable
Hearing Date: March 19, 2026

Dear Mr. Chairperson and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony to HB 614, "School Building Energy Usage - Monthly Report." Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change-causing pollution in our schools, and our group is active in Prince George's County. In particular, we worked directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a first-in-the-nation School Climate Change Action Plan.

Generally our group is favorable to legislation requiring examination of energy use in school buildings. Energy use is often one of the higher operational costs for a school district and limiting energy use reduces those costs while also limiting the impact on the climate. We are supportive of building new net zero schools and retrofitting older buildings with heat pumps, efficient lighting, and .

Firstly, Boards of Education are the wrong body to be charged with this requirement. The Board of Education is the policy oriented body. This type of data is accessible to school executive staff. If this type of policy is pursued the burden should be placed on the school district and not the Board of Education.

Secondly, this legislation is nearly duplicative of requirements already enshrined into law under Education Article § 5–312.1. While the data being provided through that existing mechanism may need fine tuning, we would recommend that monthly reporting requirements be incorporated into Education Article § 5–312.1(E) rather than be made into a disjointed energy reporting requirement.

Thirdly, there needs to be requirements for energy providers to provide the data being sought. Often energy providers provide lump sum bills limiting the ability for school systems to look at energy use in specific buildings. In order to alleviate that issue, expensive contracts need to be procured when the easiest solution would be for energy providers to be required to provide building specific data to the school district.

We do agree with that this piece of legislation is striving to accomplish, but we do find that in order to ease the burden on already challenged school staff it should be directed at school district staff, be integrated into existing statute governing school energy reporting, and come with requirements for energy providers to also provide more adequate data to school systems.

We encourage a **UNFAVORABLE** report for this legislation.