

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

2644 Riva Road · Annapolis · Maryland · 21401

BILL: HB270 ENVIRONMENT - TESTING FOR LEAD IN DRINKING WATER - PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

HEARING DATE: APRIL 5, 2017

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

POSITION: OPPOSE

CONTACT PERSON: JEANETTE ORTIZ, ESQ., *LEGISLATIVE & POLICY COUNSEL* (410.703.5352)

The Anne Arundel County Board of Education **OPPOSES House Bill 270 - Environment - Testing for Lead in Drinking Water - Public and Nonpublic Schools**. As amended, this bill requires the Department of the Environment (MDE), in consultation with the State Department of Education (MSDE), the Department of General Services (DGS), and Maryland Occupational Safety and Health to proposed regulations, on or before October 1, 2017, to require periodic testing for the presence of lead in each drinking water outlet located in an occupied public or nonpublic school building. The regulations must include the requirement that school systems repair or replace a drinking water outlet, plumbing or water line if deemed necessary. MDE is authorized to grant a waiver in several instances, including a waiver for a local school system that has completed comprehensive lead testing of the drinking water from plumbing fixtures, and a comprehensive monitoring program to ensure safe drinking water in its schools.

While we appreciate the bill sponsor's amendments to the bill in an effort to address concerns expressed by opponents, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education (Board) still has concerns with this legislation. As such, we oppose **House Bill 270** as it would still have the effect of reducing or circumscribing local board authority and creates an unfunded mandate. Additionally, this bill would require the involvement of State agencies in matters and responsibilities that currently fall under the jurisdiction of local school systems.

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AAPCS) Division of Facilities is responsible for the construction, maintenance, and operation of all public school facilities in a safe and efficient manner in support of the educational goals of AACPS. AACPS operates public school facilities in a manner conducive to the educational process by ensuring the health, safety, comfort, and welfare of the occupants. Local school systems devote substantial staff time and resources to provide healthy school environments, which include the water quality and addressing any issues associated with water quality.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on **House Bill 270**.