

Dr. Alvin Thornton
Chair, Prince George's County Board of Education
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Re: Support of Adoption of a Resolution Committing to Implementation of a Climate Change Action Plan Focus Workgroup

Dear Dr. Thornton,

The Beloved Community Interfaith Network (BCIN) of Prince George's County is made up of people from across the faith spectrum who are dedicated to the causes of social justice, human rights, and community engagement. We represent several faith traditions (Quaker, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Unitarian Universalist, Episcopal, Latter Day Saints, Catholic, Mennonite, United Church of Christ, Lutheran, Baha'i, Seventh Day Adventist) at places of worship across the county.

BCIN is writing in support of adoption by the Prince George's County Board of Education of a clear timeline to power our schools with 100% clean energy, including the energy used for electricity, heating, cooling, cooking, and transportation, and to adapt them to threats such as flooding. We are also writing in support of initiation of a Focus Workgroup to develop a School Climate Change Action Plan that will outline how to implement these goals in a timely, cost-effective, and equitable manner.

BCIN members are passionate about saving and preserving our planet for future generations, and are committed to fighting for climate justice and environmental justice. Several members work with Greenbelt Climate Action Network (GCAN) and Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) on local issues within Prince George's County towards these goals. The Unitarian Universalist Ministry For Earth (UUMFE), through one of our participant faith communities, Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church (PBUUC), has also given us perspectives on the broader impacts of what environmental devastation and the climate crisis can do to our society if not addressed properly. We believe that any efforts to mitigate and eliminate these existential problems in our society would be for the benefit of all.

Once the resolution is adopted and action plan is implemented it will:

- Reduce the carbon footprint of our county school system, which is of vital given the size and importance of the institution;
- Limit exposure of children to air pollution from the burning of fossil fuels in the buildings and on buses;
- Allow for improved heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems that will improve indoor air quality in the learning environment;
- Save money from reduced maintenance and fuel costs over time;
- Create buildings that are more resilient to flooding and storms;
- Create an opportunity for STEM, vocational, and other students to learn, hands on, about the technologies of the future;

- Set up a more equitable learning environment for all students, including by allowing saved funds to improve other neglected aspects of school buildings.

These are all goals that BCIN supports and would like to see implemented in our community. We believe that the Prince George's County Board of Education should adopt a resolution setting a date for 100% Clean Energy Schools and implement a Focus Workgroup to implement the goals.

Sincerely,

Vijay Parameshwaran, facilitator, BCIN

CC: Edward Burroughs III, Vice Chair, District 8
David Murray, District 1
Joshua M. Thomas, District 2
Pamela Boozer-Strother, District 3
Shayla Adams-Stafford, District 4
Raaheela Ahmed, District 5
Belinda Queen, District 6
Kenneth Harris II, District 7
Sonya Williams, District 9
Paul Monteiro, Appointed
Sandra D. Shephard, Appointed
Curtis Valentine, M.P.P., Appointed
Ninah Jackson, Student Member of the Board