

Interagency Commission on School Construction
200 West Baltimore Street
Suite 200
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Interagency Commission on School Construction:

Thank you for considering our testimony concerning the updates to COMAR 14.39.02. 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 recently worked directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff, elected officials, and other advocates to develop a Climate Change Action Plan for PGCPS as part of a focus work group created by the Board of Education.

During the 2022 General Assembly session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 19, the Safe Walk To School Act, and HB 566, which became effective in Maryland on July 1, 2022. The regulatory language being proposed by the IAC in COMAR 14.39.02.15 (G) and (H) clearly implements these two pieces of legislation. We are very supportive of these regulations, especially the implementation of HB 19, given the recent work from the Prince George's County School Pedestrian Task Force to improve safety for walkers in light of the deaths of two elementary school students in Riverdale, Maryland.

We will also remind the IAC that during the 2023 General Assembly session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 458, which was subsequently signed by Governor More. HB 458 was sponsored by Delegate Jazz Lewis (HD-24). This bill dealt with several issues involving school construction, but with this letter, we are concerned with § 5-327(d), the requirement that "The Interagency Commission, in coordination with the Department of General Services [(DGS)], shall develop life-cycle cost analysis standards." The effective date for the portion of the law in concern is July 1, 2023. Given the timing of implementation of HB 19 and 566 by the IAC, we expect to implementation of HB 458 in the future.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, please message climateparentsPGMD@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing the IAC acting purposefully to review pedestrian safety plans, in particular following the promulgation of the amendments to COMAR 14.39.02.15.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Jakuta". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Joseph Jakuta
Lead Volunteer
Climate Parents of Prince George's