



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**HB 1295**

**DATE: March 10, 2020**

**SPONSOR: Delegate Solomon, *et al.***

**ASSIGNED TO: Appropriations**

**CONTACT PERSON: Amy Samman (amy.samman@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: Support (Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection)**

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### **Public School Construction – School District Energy Use – Policy and Study**

House Bill 1295 prohibits the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) from approving a public school construction project for a local school system that has not adopted or updated a school district energy policy. The bill also requires the IAC to coordinate with the Maryland Energy Administration and the Maryland Clean Energy Center to study and make recommendations on expanding and providing additional funding for the Maryland Net-Zero Energy School Initiative Grant Program.

In 2017, the Montgomery County Council declared a climate emergency calling on all levels of government to “initiate a massive global mobilization to restore a safe climate and build a sustainable economy” and “transform the climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2027 and reaching 100% elimination by 2035, and initiate large-scale efforts to remove excess carbon from the atmosphere.”

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) published its inaugural Environmental Sustainability Management Plan (ESMP) in 2014. The ESMP focuses on five major categories, because they are the areas where measurable difference can be made in reducing MCPS’ carbon footprint and increasing the awareness for responsible stewardship among our students, staff, and community. These categories include: (1) Student Education, Awareness, and Actions; (2) Building Construction, Maintenance, and Operations; (3) Energy and Natural Resource Conservation; (4) Materials and Waste Cycles; and (5) Transportation. MCPS has been successful in its greenhouse gas avoidance over the past several years. According to the ESMP, the greenhouse gas avoidance in FY 2017 had more than doubled compared with the amount of greenhouse gas reduced in FY 2007.

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection supports House Bill 1295 because the State must take all possible steps to address climate change and transition to clean, renewable energy. House Bull 1295 adds another tool to the toolbox to assist Maryland in meeting its climate goals.