

Issue brief

AIA MA Priority Level

This is a High Priority bill

The Ask

Ask your legislator to support these bills

For more information

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HB 568/SB 278 – An Act establishing a special commission to study the effectiveness of the MA School Building Authority

Sponsors: Rep. Adam Scanlon/Senator Barry Finegold

Purpose

These bills would establish and regulate a special commission to study and make recommendations regarding the capacity of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) program to meet current and future school facilities needs in the Commonwealth. The Commission must also study the equity of the grant funding formula to ensure that all communities can participate in the program.

The Commission would review the alignment of the MSBA's construction cost reimbursement rate with actual construction costs and assess other MSBA policies affecting project costs. Additionally, the Commission will delve into incentive percentage points, reimbursement policies for regional technical and vocational schools, environmental and greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, support for healthy school facilities, spending on equipment, and incentives for approved educational spaces.

Comments

Overall, the Commission's mission is to address a wide range of issues related to ensuring that all students in the Commonwealth have access to high-quality, safe, healthy, and environmentally friendly school buildings. Its recommendations will encompass resource allocation, policy adjustments, and other measures to improve the state's educational infrastructure and ensure equitable opportunities for all communities.

If signed into law, would this affect the professional practice of architecture in MA? If so, how?

While these bills would not directly affect the professional practice of architecture, they could establish new regulations requiring design professionals to create healthier, safer, and greener schools if enacted.

In addition, the Commission could guide the Legislature to determine that, to keep pace with demand, more funding and higher reimbursement rates are required to design and construct school buildings. This could lead to an increase in the market for architectural design services.

Notably, the Commission would provide a forum for discussing the importance of school design and construction in achieving the Commonwealth's environmental and carbon reduction goals and suggest funding for implementing appropriate policies to that end.

