

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 469/SB 242 - An Act establishing a green and healthy schools working group and implementation plan

Sponsors: Rep. Mindy Domb/Senator Joanne Comerford

Purpose

Requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to convene an inter-agency working group on Green and Healthy Schools for the Coming Decades, including advising DPH on the implementation of Section 83 of Chapter 179 of the Acts and Resolves of 2022, the local option fossil-fuel free demonstration project.

Comments

In 2021-2022, AIA MA worked with Sen. Comerford to craft what is now Section 83 of Chapter 179 of the Acts and Resolves of 2022 (an assessment of elementary and secondary school buildings relative to energy efficiency, building conditions, safety, and public health).

These two bills are the next step in addressing the Commonwealth's long-term commitment to healthy school construction.

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 would allow architects to participate in a proposed working group designated to help guide the Green and Healthy Schools for the Coming Decades interagency working group (IAWG).

The IAWG would be responsible for advising the DPH on Section 83 of Chapter 179 of the Acts and Resolves of 2022, which requires the DPH, the Massachusetts School Building Authority, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Energy Resources to conduct an assessment of elementary and secondary school buildings relative to energy efficiency, building conditions, safety, and public health. The assessment also requires cataloging the age and condition of any building systems relying on the on-site combustion of fossil fuels.

The IAWG would be responsible for recommending a plan for implementing and enforcing green and healthy school standards for the renovation, rehabilitation, and construction of school buildings by 2050. The plan must detail the division of responsibility among state agencies, including a designated agency for overall management, and include five-year benchmarks and implementation milestones.

Lastly, the plan should consist of procedures for publicly reporting and assessing progress toward achieving the benchmarks for each five-year period.

