

TESTIMONY

Testimony To: House Committee on Education
Respectfully Submitted by: Daniel French, Secretary of Education
Subject: Testimony on PCB Testing and Remediation in Schools
Date: March 22, 2022

Background

PCB testing and remediation for schools is an important initiative relative to the safety and health of our school buildings. However, the schedule for this work needs to be realistic and considered along with the other policy work that has been enacted relative to the improvement of school facilities under Act 72 of 2021. Also, the testing and remediation of Radon needs to be factored into a larger schedule for facilities work since like PCBs, both are related to indoor air quality and therefore relevant to the mitigation work already underway in schools because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations

Based on this context, I recommend the following changes to scheduling these projects:

1. The PCB testing timeframe should be extended out to 2026 to allow for more time to complete this work.
2. Radon testing should be extended out to 2026 as well for the same reason and to allow for better coordination among these initiatives relative to evaluating indoor air quality in our schools.
3. The Facilities Assessment report due in 10/2022 under Act 72 should be extended out to 10/2023 to allow more time for this assessment to be completed. It will be difficult to complete the assessment this summer with all the other work underway. We are meeting this week to review the first draft of the Facilities Inventory Report and should be able to share a final draft soon.