



HEALTHIER WORKPLACES | A HEALTHIER WORLD

July 21, 2022

Senator Thomas R. Carper (Delaware)
Chair
Senate Committee on Environment and Public
Works
United States Senate

Senator Shelley Moore Capito (West Virginia)
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment and Public
Works
United States Senate

AIHA Support for S.2660, the Get Toxic Substances Out of Schools Act

Dear Chairman Carper and Ranking Member Capito:

AIHA, the association for scientists and professionals committed to preserving and ensuring occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS), **strongly encourages you to swiftly pass S.2660, the Get Toxic Substances Out of Schools Act.**

The **2021 State of Our Schools report** ([PDF](#)) revealed chronic underfunding of maintenance and repairs for aging school buildings. On average, our nation's public schools are 54 years old, built in 1968, and need to be replaced or fully modernized. As noted in the report, "In 2020 the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that 41 percent of districts required HVAC systems upgrades or replacements in at least half of their schools. In addition, 20 to 35 percent of all school districts had serious deficiencies in at least half of their roofing, lighting or safety and security systems." (p.8)

While not a complete solution, the Get Toxic Substances Out of Schools Act would take a clear step forward, helping solve this complex problem by authorizing \$52 billion over ten years in grants to schools to identify, prevent, or eliminate student and personnel exposure to high-hazard chemicals. It is critical that the work performed under these grants be conducted by knowledgeable professionals, which is why **AIHA is particularly supportive of the bill's requirement that work performed under a grant be stamped by a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH)¹** or similar accredited occupational health and safety professional who has by

¹ The CIH is a global standard that demonstrates workers possess a minimum level of knowledge and skills related to workplace health and safety. For additional information on the CIH, please visit <https://gobgc.org/cih/>.

education, experience and examination demonstrated professional-level knowledge and skills in occupational health, safety and industrial hygiene.

Conclusion and Next Steps

AIHA strongly encourages you to swiftly pass S.2660, the Get Toxic Substances Out of Schools Act, as it will help improve the learning and working conditions of our nation's schools. If you have any questions about AIHA's support for this bill or other matters, please contact me at mames@aiha.org or (703) 846-0730.

Sincerely,



Mark Ames
Director, Government Relations
AIHA

About AIHA

AIHA is the association for scientists and professionals committed to preserving and ensuring occupational and environmental health and safety in the workplace and community. Founded in 1939, we support our members with our expertise, networks, comprehensive education programs, and other products and services that help them maintain the highest professional and competency standards. More than half of AIHA's nearly 8,500 members are Certified Industrial Hygienists, and many hold other professional designations. AIHA serves as a resource for those employed across the public and private sectors as well as to the communities in which they work. For more information, please visit www.aiha.org.

Cc:

Senator Edward J. Markey (Massachusetts)
Senator Tina Smith (Minnesota)
Senator Patrick Leahy (Vermont)
Senator Cory Booker (New Jersey)
Senator Chris Van Hollen (Maryland)
Senator Bernard Sanders (Vermont)
Senator Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut)
Senator Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts)
Senator Jeff Merkley (Oregon)
Senator Jon Ossoff (Georgia)
Senator Alex Padilla (California)